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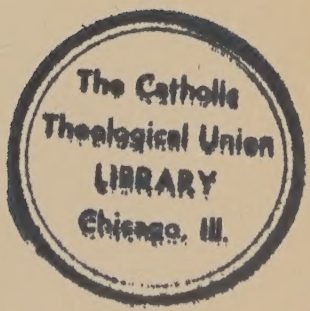

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# GENERAL INTRODUCTION

TO THE

# STUDY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

*ABRIDGED EDITION.*

BY

REV. FRANCIS E. GIGOT, S.S., D.D.,

*Professor of Sacred Scripture in St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, Md.; Author of "Outlines of Jewish History," "Outlines of New Testament History," "Biblical Lectures," etc.*

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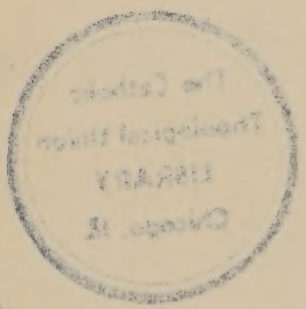

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# PREFACE.

THE present volume is not an altogether new work. As stated in the title-page, it is an "abridged edition" of the larger volume on General Introduction wh ch the present writer published a few years ago. Although this larger work was well received by the public, as proved by the fact that its third edition is nearly exhausted, professors of Holy Scripture often expressed the wish that a shorter form of it could be issued. An abridged edition, it was argued, would enable students to cover more easily the ground of General Introduction within the short space of time at their disposal, while the unabridged work would prove to them a valuable book of reference, and continue to be useful to priests on the mission and to readers generally. It was also supposed that in its shorter form the General Introduction would be welcome as a text-book in colleges and other institutions where the larger work had but little chance to be adopted. It is for these and similar reasons that the present edition has been prepared.

As might well be expected, this "abridged edition" takes up the same general topics and follows the same general method of treatment as the corresponding larger work. The "Synopses" of the Chapters have been substantially preserved, and the text of the complete edition, though constantly shortened, has been extensively utilized. Questions of minor

importance have either been dropped, or materially abridged, or at least printed in smaller type. Oftentimes developments of important topics have been indicated rather than given in full; in which cases reference is usually made to corresponding chapters or passages of the larger work, where they may be easily found by both teachers and students. The facsimiles of MSS., inscriptions, etc., given at the end of the complete edition have been preserved, together with most of the references to the best books from which further information can be gathered. Only here and there additions have been made, principal among which may be mentioned the paragraphs upon the American standard edition of the English Revised Version.

BALTIMORE, February, 1904.

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# GENERAL INTRODUCTION

TO THE

# STUDY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

## PROLEGOMENA.

### § 1. *The Bible.*

**1. Definition and Various Names.** The Bible is the name commonly given to the collection of writings which the Church of God has recognized as inspired. It means "the Book" *par excellence*, the literature which of all the literatures, ancient and modern, is the most venerable, the most beautiful, and the most influential.[1]

Among the other collective names which are frequently applied to the inspired writings we may mention: (1) *the Scripture;* (2) *the Scriptures;* (3) the *Holy Scriptures;* (4) the *Old Testament*, probably employed by St. Paul to designate the books written before the coming of Our Lord,[2] and the *New Testament*, now in common use when speaking of the sacred writings composed since the coming of Christ.

[1] Cfr. *The Bible as a Literature*, in "Biblical Lectures" (Lect. I), by the present writer.

[2] II Cor. iii, 14. The word *Testamentum* (hence the English) is an old Latin rendering of the Hebrew בְּרִית (*B'rtth*) and of the Greek διαθήκη, the meaning of which is "Covenant." It is now extended to the written records of the Old and of the New Covenant.

**2. Number of the Sacred Books.** With regard to the books which go to make up the Bible, the Council of Trent has left no room for doubt by its distinct enumeration of all the writings which must be held as "sacred and canonical." [1] In conformity with this enumeration, the Catholic editions of Holy Writ contain seventy-two books, forty-five of which make up the Old Testament, and twenty-seven the New Testament. In opposition to it, Protestant copies of the sacred writings are usually deprived of those seven books of the Old Testament which are not found in the Hebrew Text;[2] while, therefore, they agree with our Catholic Bible as to the number of the sacred books of the New Testament, they contain only thirty-eight of the inspired writings composed before the coming of Our Lord.

Owing to their peculiar method of counting their sacred writings, the Jews spoke formerly of twenty-four books, and speak now of only twenty-two books in the Hebrew Bible.

**3. Principal Divisions and Arrangement of the Sacred Books.** Next to the general division of the Christian Bible into the books of the Old Testament and those of the New Testament, the most important division of the inspired writings is that found in the Hebrew Text. The Jews divide their sacred books into three great sections called respectively "the Law" (or *Torah*), "the Prophets" or (*N'bhi'im*), and "the Writings" (or *K'thubhim;* in Greek, *Hagiographa*). "The Law" includes the five books (Pentateuch) associated with the name of Moses. "The Prophets" are subdivided into the *earlier* prophets (Josue, Judges, I, II Samuel, I, II Kings) and the *later* prophets (Isaias, Jeremias, Ezechiel, and the twelve minor prophets). "The Writings," or Hagiographa, include (1) Poetical Books (Psalms, Proverbs, Job); (2) the

[1] *Concil. Trid.*, Sess. IV, Decret. de Canon. Script.

[2] These seven books are: Tobias, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, the first and second books of the Machabees.

five Meghilloth, or Rolls (Canticle of Canticles, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, Esther); (3) other books (Daniel, Esdras, Nehemias, Paralipomenon or Chronicles).

A very different arrangement of the sacred books of the Old Testament is to be met with in the Vulgate, and also in the Septuagint from which it is borrowed. There is indeed no order formally indicated in those ancient versions of the Old Testament, yet—with the sole exception of the books of the Machabees, which close the whole list—all the writings of the Old Covenant which treat of the same topic are carefully placed together. The same topical arrangement can be easily discovered in the list of the books of the New Testament. So that the sacred writings of both Testaments are generally divided into (1) Historical, (2) Didactic, and (3) Prophetical books.

### § 2. *General Introduction to the Bible.*

**1. Its Object.** The scope of the Introduction to the Bible has varied considerably in the course of centuries. The tendency, in the present day, is to restrict it to a few questions, particularly those which help directly to determine the value and meaning of the sacred writings. Among Catholics, in particular, the precise object of a *General* Introduction to the Scriptures is usually limited to the preliminary questions which concern the Bible considered as a whole—to such questions, for instance, as the manner in which the inspired books came gradually to form the collection now known as the Bible, the manner in which these same books, once collected, were transmitted in the course of ages, etc. We shall therefore consider as belonging to a *General* Introduction only those topics which refer to the sacred writings viewed collectively, and assign to a *Special* Introduction all the preliminary questions about the contents, purpose, date, credibility, etc., of the *separate* books.

**2. Its Method of Study.** The first to delineate and apply the proper method of study for a Biblical Introduction was the French Oratorian, Richard SIMON (1638–1712). Setting aside the dry and abstract method of those who had preceded him, he undertook to make a study at once historical and critical of the principal topics which belong to Biblical Introduction, hence the name of "Histoire Critique" which he gave to his great works on the Text, Versions, and principal Commentaries of Holy Writ. According to him, the sacred books, no less than their various translations, are literary products which must bear the impress of the ideas and methods of composition prevalent at the time when they were written, so that to view and appreciate these works rightly one should study them carefully in themselves and in the light of the historical events under which they came into existence. Simon's method and conclusions were at first strenuously opposed and soon afterwards set aside. In the nineteenth century, however, the unfavorable verdict has been reversed, and the historico-critical method is now acknowledged as the one according to which the questions introductory to the interpretation of the Bible should be handled.[1]

**3. Principal Divisions of General Introduction.** The leading topics to which the method just described is to be applied form the principal divisions of Biblical Introduction. These main divisions may be stated as follows: (1) Biblical *Canonics*, or historical examination of the manner in which the inspired books which make up the Bible were gradually gathered and recognized as the Word of God; (2) Biblical *Textual Criticism*, or scientific investigation of the way in which the sacred books have been transmitted to us either

[1] Cfr. R. CORNELY, S.J., Historica et Critica Introductio, vol. i, Introd. Generalis, p. °; VIGOUROUX, Dict. de la Bible, art. Introduction Biblique, cols. 916, 918.

in their original language or in their principal translations; (3) Biblical *Hermeneutics*, or the principles and history of Biblical interpretation; (4) Biblical *Theopneustics*, or scientific study of the question of Inspiration.

### 4. Recent Literature.

Recent Catholic works on *General* Introduction are comparatively numerous. The best known among them are the following:

Abbé VIGOUROUX, S.S., Manuel Biblique, vol. 1st. (Many editions have appeared since the first, completed in 1880.)

UBALDO UBALDI, Introductio in S. Scripturam, vol. 1st (Rome, 2d edit., 1882).

Abbé TROCHON, Introduction Générale (Paris, 1886). A compendium of the same work was published in 1889.

RUDOLPHUS CORNELY, S.J., Historica et Critica Introductio in Libros Sacros, vol. i (Paris, 1885). A compendium of the same work, also in Latin, was published in Paris in 1889.

FRANZ KAULEN, Einleitung in die heilige Schrift des A. und N. T. (Freiburg, 3d edit., 1890). A compendium of it appeared in 1897.

Abbé A. LOISY, Histoire du Canon de l'Ancien Testament (Paris, 1890); Histoire du Canon du Nouveau Testament (Paris, 1891). Histoire Critique du Texte et des Versions de la Bible (incomplete) (Paris, 1892, 1893).

A. E. BREEN, A General and Critical Introduction to the Study of Holy Scripture (Rochester, N. Y., 1897).

C. CHAUVIN, Leçons d'Introduction Générale théologique, historique et critique aux divines Ecritures (Paris, 1897).

During the same length of time only few Protestant works on *General* Introduction have been published. They are as follows:

CHARLES A. BRIGGS, Biblical Study (N. Y., 1887). A new and more complete edition of this work appeared in 1899, under the title of: General Introduction to the Study of Holy Scripture.

HENRY M. HARMAN, Introduction to the Study of the Holy Scriptures (10th edit., N. Y., 1894).

EDUARD REUSS, Allgemeine Einleitung zur Bibel, in Band 1 of his general work entitled: Das alte Testament, übersetzt, eingeleitet und erläutert (Brunswick, 1892).

A. SCHLATTER, Einleitung in die Bibel (1890).

# PART FIRST.

## BIBLICAL CANONICS.

## SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTER I.

### ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF THE CANON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

I. MEANING OF THE TERMS CANON, CANONICAL (PROTO- AND DEUTERO-) BOOKS.

II. THE TRADITIONAL VIEW.

1. Beginning of the Canon with Moses (Deuter. xxxi, 9–13; 24–26).
2. Its continuation from Moses to the Babylonian Captivity:
   - Traces of collections of inspired books during this period.
   - Probability that these collections were added to the Books of Moses.
3. Discussion as to its close at the time of Esdras.
4. Relation between the Alexandrian and the Palestinian Canons of the Old Testament.

III. RECENT THEORIES.

1. The three parts of the Hebrew Bible point to three stages in the formation of the Canon.
2. The Preparation for a Canon in:
   - Separate literary productions (songs, laws, history, prophecy).
   - Distinct collections of these literary productions.
3. The First Canon, or "*the Law*":
   - Formally begun in the seventh century B.C.
   - Its gradual development brought to a close by Esdras.
4. The Second Canon, or "*the Prophets*":
   - Formation begun not earlier than 300 B.C.
   - Completed by the end of the same century.
5. The Third Canon, or "*the Writings*":
   - This third group of Sacred Writings mentioned in Prologue to Ecclesiasticus.
   - Its formation falls probably between 160 B.C. and 110 A.D.

# PART FIRST.

## BIBLICAL CANONICS.

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### CHAPTER I.

#### ORIGIN AND GROWTH OF THE CANON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

§ 1. *Meaning of the Terms Canon, Canonical (Proto- and Deutero-) Books.*

Before beginning to sketch the history of the Canon of the Old Testament, a few terms which will frequently occur in it must be defined. The first of these terms is the word *Canon* itself. For many centuries, it has designated, as it does now, the collection and list of the books which the Church receives as the inspired rule of faith and practice. The corresponding term, *Canonical*, means usually, when applied to writings, books which have been ratified by the Church as belonging to the collection of the Holy Scriptures.

Among the canonical books some are called *Proto*-canonical, that is, belonging to the Canon from the first, while others are classed as *Deutero*-canonical, that is, admitted into it after the doubts entertained for some time about their sacred character had been finally removed. Protestants wrongly consider the Deutero-canonical books and parts of books of the

Old Testament[1] as uncanonical, and hence call them the *Apocrypha*.

### § 2. *Traditional View of the Origin and Growth of the Canon of the Old Testament.*

**1. Beginning of the Canon with Moses.** It is to Moses, the great lawgiver of Israel, that century after century Jewish and Christian scholars have traced back the origin of the Canon of the Old Testament. Their position is founded chiefly on two passages of Deuteronomy (xxxi, 9–13; 24–26) wherein "this law" (apparently our Pentateuch) is described as written by Moses and given to the people of God as the authentic rule of their religious life. Whence it is inferred that the first instalment of the inspired writings of the Old Testament goes back to the time of Moses.

**2. Continuation of the Canon from Moses to the Babylonian Captivity.** A somewhat similar line of argument is followed by the traditional school to render it probable that between Moses and the Babylonian Captivity sacred books were collected and gradually joined to the canonical writings of the great lawgiver of Israel. Appeal is made, for instance, to II Paralip. xxix, 30 as implying the existence of a twofold collection of liturgic hymns, viz., that of David and that of Asaph. We are also referred to Prov. xxv, 1, where we read of the parables of Solomon, which the men of Ezechias copied out and added to those already collected. Finally, the prophet Daniel (ix, 2) speaks of "the books" which he has consulted, and among which were the prophecies of Jeremias.

Now these and other such parts of Holy Writ were not

[1] These Deutero-canonical books, or parts of books, are not found in the Hebrew Bible. They are as follows: Tobias, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, the two books of the Machabees, the fragments of the book of Esther (Estn. x, 4–xiv, 24), and those of the book of Daniel (Dan. iii, 24–90; xiii, 1–xiv, 42).

simply preserved as *independent* collections; they were also added gradually to the sacred books of Moses, and thus formed, even before the Babylonian Exile (586 B.C.), a real continuation of the primitive Canon of the Old Testament. Thus, we are referred to Josue xxiv, 25 sq., as implying that Moses' successor in command added his own writings to that "volume of the law" which Deuteronomy ascribes twice to the great lawgiver of Moses. Again, what we are told of the prophet Samuel laying before Jehovah "the law of the kingdom," which he had written "in a book," is considered as a trace of the custom of placing other writings by the side of those already kept in a sacred place (I Kings x, 25). Furthermore, we are reminded by conservative scholars that the Hebrew text of the historical books composed before the Babylonian Captivity (Josue, Judges, Ruth, etc.), opens with the conjunction *and* (ו), a fact which seems to imply that each of these writings was intended, from the first, as a continuation of the preceding sacred books and as an integrant part of the same series. Finally, since after the Captivity Nehemias and Judas Machabeus made up a library of sacred books (II Machab. ii, 13; cfr. Josephus, Wars of the Jews, Book vii, chap. v, § 5, and Antiquities of the Jews, Book v, chap. i, § 7), it is probable that in this they were only following the example of their ancestors.

These arguments do not prove absolutely that the Canon continued to be enlarged between Moses and the Babylonian Captivity. For they run counter to the fact that the Samaritans have never regarded as sacred any other books besides the Pentateuch, although their sect was not finally organized before the time of Nehemias.

**3. Discussion as to the Close of the Canon of the Old Testament at the Time of Esdras.** The same obscurity which surrounds the growth of the Canon of the Old Testa-

ment prevails in connection with its close. There is, indeed, a very widely spread opinion that the Canon of the Old Testament was brought to a close in the time of Nehemias and Esdras, but it is far from deserving the full credence which many Catholic and Protestant scholars gave it since the middle of the sixteenth century. The principal grounds in favor of that opinion are: (1) The *Testimony of Josephus*[1] (1st cent. A.D.), who speaks of "twenty-two books only," which "all Jews" consider as sacred, and which were composed before the reign of Artaxerxes (B.C. 465–425); (2) The *Fourth book of Esdras*[2] (end of 1st cent. A.D.), an apocryphal writing manifestly bent on exaggerating the work of Esdras anent the books of the Old Testament; (3) The *Opinions* of several *Fathers* or *Ecclesiastical Writers*, some of whom depend on the fourth book of Esdras for their information; (4) The *Testimony of the Talmud*,[3] or uncanonical written law of the Jews, which in one of its treatises enumerates in order the traditional authors of their sacred books and mentions Esdras as the last one in date.

The growing tendency of Catholic[4] and Protestant scholars alike is to reject a theory the mainstay of which is the unreliable fourth book of Esdras. Their chief reason for not admitting that the Canon of the Old Testament was closed at the time of Esdras is found in the difference which exists, as regards their contents, between the Hebrew Text and the Septuagint Version or oldest Greek translation of the Old Testament which the Greek-speaking Jews used freely in their religious services at and before the beginning of the Christian era. While the Hebrew Bible comprises only *Proto*-canonical books supposed to have been all written before the death of Esdras, the Septuagint Version contains, over and

[1] Against Apion, Book i, § 8.
[2] Cfr. IV Esdras, chap. xiv.
[3] Treatise *Baba Bathra*, fol. $14^b$.
[4] Of such writers, for instance, as VIGOUROUX, LOISY, TROCHON, etc.

above them, *Deutero*-canonical books, some of which—as, for instance, the books of the Machabees—were evidently composed much later than the middle of the fifth century B.C. As these additional books are not collected in a final appendix to the Septuagint translation, but are distributed among the other books of the Hebrew Bible as if of equal authority with them, it seems impossible to admit that the Canon of the Old Testament was finally brought to a close at the time of Nehemias and Esdras.

**4. Relation between the Alexandrian and the Palestinian Canons of the Old Testament.** The material difference just pointed out between the contents of the Hebrew Bible and those of its oldest Greek translation has given rise to the important distinction between the *Alexandrian* and the *Palestinian* Canons of the Old Testament,[1] thus called from the two places (Alexandria in Egypt, and Palestine) with which their respective origin is chiefly connected. That before Our Lord's time the Jews of Alexandria—and indeed all the Greek-speaking Jews—numbered among their sacred writings both proto- and deutero-canonical books can hardly be doubted. For, on the one hand, all the extant manuscripts of the Septuagint Version comprise both classes of books without the least trace of difference of authority between them, and on the other hand, as we shall see later, both deutero- and proto-canonical books stood on the same footing at the very beginning of the Church, that is, at a time when no deviation from Jewish tradition can seriously be supposed.

The difference itself between the two Canons goes back most likely to the time before the Christian era. While the Jews of Palestine never admitted into their sacred collection

[1] The *Alexandrian* Canon is also called the *Hellenistic* Canon, or Canon of the *Hellenists*, because it was the one admitted by the *Greek*-speaking Jews.

any besides the proto-canonical books, those of Egypt gradually added to them other books, viz., the deutero-canonical writings.[1]

### § 3. *Recent Theories about the Origin and Growth of the Canon of the Old Testament.*

**1. Meaning of the Threefold Division of the Hebrew Bible.** Side by side with the traditional view, there are recent theories which claim to account better for the origin and growth of the Canon of the Old Testament. They start with a novel explanation of the very ancient division of the Hebrew Text into three parts, viz., "the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings." They maintain—and indeed with great probability—that this division points to a gradual development in the formation of the Old Testament Canon. As the sacred books which make up the Hebrew Bible were only gradually composed, so also were they only gradually gathered and made to constitute the threefold collection which is called "the Law, the Prophets, and the other Books" in the Prologue to Ecclesiasticus, that is, as early as 130 B.C.[2]

**2. The Preparation for a Canon.** While the traditional view does not go back of Moses and the work ascribed to him, in order to account for the beginning of the Canon, the recent theories refer us to several preparatory stages. They assume the existence of a large and varied Hebrew literature out of which our Pentateuch itself was formed.

The literature of Israel, we are told, like that of any other nation, began naturally with productions of a much more primitive character than the books of law and history found

[1] Cfr. unabridged edit. of "General Introduction," by the present writer (p. 33 sq.).

[2] The view that these three divisions correspond to three several degrees of inspiration vouchsafed to the sacred writers, and the supposition that they respond to three several degrees of their personal dignity, look like *a priori* conceptions.

in our first canonical collection. Separate songs celebrating the glorious deeds either of Yahweh or of Israel's heroes must have been the earliest fruit of the Hebrew literary genius, and in point of fact some of these poetical pieces are simply embodied in the sacred writings,[1] while others are explicitly mentioned as taken from the distinct collections into which they had been gathered in the course of time.[2] In like manner, recent investigations into the composition of the Pentateuch have shown that several collections of Israelite laws, such, for instance, as the "Book of the Covenant," [3] the "Law of Holiness," [4] etc., were made at different times and long before they came to be employed by the sacred writer. Again, it is considered solidly established that at the root of the history contained in "the Law," or first part of the Canon, there lie old written traditions and previous historical compilations, the style and other peculiarities of which can still be discerned in our inspired narrative. That collections of prophetical writings were also made and transmitted before our present Pentateuch had been recognized as canonical is also affirmed by recent theories regarding the origin and growth of the Canon of the Old Testament.

**3. The First Canon, or "the Law."** The practical means whereby one of the literary productions of Israel was finally considered as a canonical book among the Jews is a matter of uncertainty both to the defenders of the old traditional view [5] and to those of the recent theories. The latter scholars, however, point justly to two great events in Jewish history, with which a solemn promulgation and recognition of a book as sacred can well be connected. The first of these events

[1] Cfr. Exod. xv, 1 sq.; Numb. xxi, 27–30.
[2] Numb. xxi, 14; Jos. x, 13; II Kings i, 18; etc.
[3] Exod. xx, 20–xxiii, 33.
[4] Levit. xvii–xxvi.
[5] Cfr. Vigouroux, Man. Biblique, vol. i, n. 26; and Loisy, Canon de l'Ancien Testament, p. 33.

goes back to 621 B.C., when the Deuteronomic Law, spoken of as "the Book of the Law" in IV Kings xxii, xxiii, and II Paralip. xxxiv, xxxv,[1] was acknowledged by both Josias and his people as enjoying the full authority of a sacred book. To this first instalment of the sacred collection large additions were gradually made down to the middle of the fifth century B.C., when, in a second ceremony resembling in many ways the one which had occurred under Josias, Esdras publicly read the complete law of Moses, and the people pledged themselves solemnly to live up to its requirements (II Esdr. viii, ix).

That only the Pentateuch was thus made canonical in the time of Esdras is confirmed by the fact that the Samaritans, whose definitive organization as a separate community is to be placed a little later, do not recognize as Holy Writ any other books besides the Pentateuch.[2]

**4. The Second Canon, or "the Prophets."** When it is remembered that "the Prophets," or second part of the Hebrew Bible, includes historical works (Josue, Judges, Samuel, Kings) which form a natural continuation to the history of the Jewish people contained in the Pentateuch, it can easily be understood that all such books avowedly compiled from prophetical sources or breathing a prophetical spirit would be sooner or later joined, together with the prophetical writings proper (Isaias, Jeremias, etc.), to the sacred books of Moses. The period within which the second collection of inspired writings was formed can be given only approximately. Begun a little later than the final organization of the Samaritan community, which does not include any of the prophetical writings in its Canon, it was brought to a close some time before the Prologue

[1] That "Book of the Law" was not the whole Pentateuch. Cfr. Abbé MARTIN, Introduction à la Critique Générale de l'Ancien Testament, vol. ii, p. 230 sq.; DRIVER, Deuteronomy, in the International Critical Commentary; etc.

[2] G. WILDEBOER, loc. cit., pp. 104–111.

to Ecclesiasticus, which speaks of "the Prophets" as of a well-known and perfectly defined collection of sacred writings. Hence recent theories infer that "the Prophets," or second Canon, was not begun earlier than 300 B.C., and was completed by the end of the same century.

**5. The Third Canon, or "the Writings."** Side by side with "the Law and the Prophets," the Prologue to Ecclesiasticus speaks of "other books," of "the rest of the books," as "delivered to the Jews from their fathers." This reference to a third collection of sacred books implies that when the Prologue was written (that is, about 130 B.C.), the formation of the third Canon was at least begun for some time, but it does not give us any information about its extent in the middle of the second century B.C., or about the date at which it was brought to a close. Probably most of "the Hagiographa" were already in existence when the second Canon was completed, but began to be gathered up into a third Canon only about 160 B.C. This third collection of sacred writings, which is designated in the New Testament under the name of "the Psalms" (Luke xxiv, 44), from its first and oldest part, the book of Psalms, did not apparently receive the final ratification of its present contents long before the middle of the second century A.D.[1]

[1] For a detailed exposition of these new theories the student is referred to G. WILDEBOER, the Origin of the Canon of the Old Testament; H. E. RYLE, Essay on the Canon of the Old Testament; S. DAVIDSON, the Canon of the Bible; W. SANDAY, Inspiration, Lectures ii–v.

## SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTER II.

### The Canon of the Old Testament in the Christian Church.

*Section I. From the Apostles to the Middle of the Fifth Century.*

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**I. The Canon as admitted by the Apostles.**

1. The Septuagint Version habitually quoted by New Testament writers.
2. The use of the Greek Scriptures allowed to the Neophytes.
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1. Special importance of the Testimony of the early Ecclesiastical writers.
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## CHAPTER II.

### THE CANON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

### SECTION I. FROM THE APOSTLES TO THE MIDDLE OF THE FIFTH CENTURY.

#### § 1. *The Canon as Admitted by the Apostles.*

**1. The Septuagint Version Habitually Quoted by the New Testament Writers.** With the beginning of Christianity opens a new and most important period in the history of the Canon of the Old Testament. The sacred books of Israel contained in a Bible which exists in two forms (the Hebrew and the Greek) cease to be the exclusive possession of the Jews, and are henceforth read with equal reverence in both the Jewish and the Christian assemblies. In the Hebrew Text the inspired writings are still divided into "the Law, the Prophets, and the Writings," and the contents of this last division are yet undetermined.[1] In the Greek Bible, or Septuagint, this threefold division of the sacred books has long given way to the arrangement which we now find in our own copies of the Septuagint and of the Vulgate: they present the deutero-canonical writings of the Old Testament so mingled with the proto-canonical books as to assign to them the same authority.

In presence of the Bible in these two forms the founders and first writers of the Church made a choice, and their choice,

[1] Cfr. WILDEBOER, pp. 72–75.

which was the outcome of both natural circumstances and inward divine guidance, settled in a practical manner the important question: Which of the two Bibles should henceforth be regarded as the Bible of the Christian Church? Sent to convert the Greek-speaking world, they naturally appealed to the existing Greek version of Holy Writ for oral and written proofs in favor of Christ's messiahship and divinity. In point of fact, their quotations from the Greek Bible are so numerous (about 300 out of 350 quotations of the Old Testament in the New), and of such a nature, that some writers have seen in them a proof that the Apostles had formally ratified all its contents. The inference, however, is not probable. On the one hand, this distinct approval of the entire Greek Bible has left no trace in history, and, on the other hand, the variety of opinions which soon arose regarding the extent of the Canon tends to show that such an approval was never given.

**2. The Use of the Greek Scriptures Allowed to the Neophytes.** From the fact that the Apostles did not formulate an express decision in favor of the Septuagint Version and all its contents, Protestant writers generally draw an argument against the canonical character of the books which the Septuagint contained over and above those of the Hebrew Bible. They affirm that the Apostles considered as inspired only the books of the Palestinian Canon, and that this is why they refrained from a positive approval of the Greek Bible and its fuller Canon. This line of argument is inadmissible. For, if the Apostles looked upon the deutero-canonical writings as non-inspired, it was their plain duty not only to abstain from giving them full approval, but also to exclude them from the Bible used by the early Christians. This exclusion was all the more imperatively required because the intermingling of proto- and deutero-canonical books in the Septuagint trans-

lation was such as to imply their real equality. But, far from excluding them from the Greek Scriptures, the Apostles allowed to the early Christian communities the use of the Alexandrian Canon, without any distinction between the books it contained. It is plain, therefore, that if the attitude of the Apostles regarding the contents of the Septuagint Version proves anything, it proves that, in their eyes, all the books of the Greek Bible were really divine.

**3. Allusions to the Deutero-canonical Books found in the New Testament.** Our position derives a powerful confirmation from the fact that the writers of the New Testament show a close acquaintance with the deutero-canonical books. They never quote them explicitly, it is true, but time and again they borrow expressions and ideas from them.[1] Again, "the examples of religious courage and constancy extolled by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews (xi, 34 sq.) are undoubtedly copied in part from the history of the Machabees (II Mach. vi, 18–vii, 42); and just as he presents these latter to the admiration of the faithful as having claims equal to those of the heroes of sacred antiquity, so the documents relating the life of both must have had an equal value in the eyes of the writer quoting them."[2] From these allusions to the deutero-canonical books we naturally infer that when they used and put on the same level all the books found in the Alexandrian Canon, the neophytes simply followed the example set before them by their teachers.

It is true, as stated above, that the New Testament writers do not quote expressly the deutero-canonical books, but this may be accounted for otherwise than by their desire of marking them off as uncanonical, for, in point of fact, they have neither quoted nor even alluded to several *proto*-canonical

[1] Cfr., for instance, James i, 19, with Ecclesiasticus v, 13, and iv, 29; I Peter i, 6–7, with Wisdom iii, 5–6; Heb. i, 3, with Wisdom vii, 26· etc.

[2] Reuss, Hist. of the Canon of Holy Scripture, p. 10 sq., Engl. Transl.

books whose sacred character they of course never questioned.[1]

## § 2. *The First Three Centuries.*

**1. Special Importance of the Testimony of the Early Ecclesiastical Writers.** In the history of the Canon of the Old Testament in the Christian Church especial importance attaches naturally to the testimony of the early ecclesiastical writers. As they stood nearest to the apostolic times, they had the best opportunity to learn which Canon had received the practical approval of the Apostles, which Canon they should themselves use and transmit to their successors. Whatever Bible they quoted from, whatever books they regarded as inspired, the same were bound to become and remain the Bible and the sacred books of all future generations. Their words form the first links in that long chain of testimonies in favor of the deutero-canonical writings, which connects the present with the past, and which depends ultimately for its worth on the strength of its first links. This is why most recent Biblical scholars appeal to the testimony of the earliest ecclesiastical writers, fully persuaded that these first disciples of the Apostles simply continue and give expression to the mind of their teachers in regard to the Canon of Holy Writ.

**2. The Canon of the Western and Eastern Churches.** One of the best ascertained facts in the history of the Canon of the Old Testament during the first three centuries is that both the Western and Eastern Churches used a Bible whose contents were more extensive than those of the Hebrew Text. This Bible was either the Septuagint Version itself, naturally employed by the early Fathers who wrote in Greek, or the old Latin Version, which was made directly from the

[1] These books are: Abdias, Nahum, Canticle of Canticles, Ecclesiastes, Esther, Esdras, and Nehemias.

Septuagint, and contained, like the Greek Bible, both the proto- and the deutero-canonical books of the Old Testament.

Another fact, no less certain than the one just referred to, is that the Greek and Latin Fathers of this period quote both sets of writings, without the least suspicion that the Apostles ever disapproved of any of them. They use both for the purpose of edification and instruction, and ascribe to them equal authority. This is the case with St. CLEMENT of Rome († 100 A.D.), who was unquestionably the most prominent figure in the sub-Apostolic age, and who, in his Epistle to the Corinthians, makes use of the books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, and summarizes the book of Judith and that of Esther with its deutero-canonical additions.[1] In like manner, the book of Tobias is known to the author of the very ancient homily usually referred to as the second epistle of St. Clement,[2] whilst Ecclesiasticus and the second book of the Machabees are made use of in "The Shepherd," a work commonly ascribed to HERMAS.[3] The writings of St. IRENÆUS († 202 A.D.), the illustrious Bishop of Lyons, afford us a testimony weightier still, because of his personal relations with the churches of Asia and with that of Rome. He makes use of the book of Wisdom, quotes Baruch under the name of "Jeremias the Prophet," and the deutero-canonical parts of Daniel as "Daniel the Prophet."[4] To these testimonies might be added those of other Western ecclesiastical writers, such as St. HIPPOLYTUS of Rome († 220 A.D.), TERTULLIAN († 220 A.D.), St. CYPRIAN († 258 A.D.), but as it is granted on all hands that these witnesses quote the deutero-canonical writings without

[1] Cfr. I Cor. iii with Wisdom ii, 24; xxvii with Wisdom xi, 22; xii, 12; also I Cor. lv with Judith, passim, and Esther xiv.

[2] Cfr. II Cor. xvi with Tobias xii, 9.

[3] Cfr., e.g., 1st Commandment and 5th Similitude, chap. v, with Ecclesiasticus xviii, 1; also 1st Comm. with II Mach. vii, 28.

[4] Cfr. Against Heresies, Book V, chap. xxxv, § 1; Book IV, chap. v, § 2; Book IV, chap. viii, § 3.

scruple, speak of them as "Holy Scripture," and cite passages with the solemn introductory formulas, "as it is written," "the Holy Spirit teaches," etc., it is not necessary to insist on their testimony.[1]

If from the Western we turn to the Eastern Churches, we find no less numerous, no less explicit, statements in favor of the sacred character of the deutero canonical books. Thus, the writer of the epistle usually ascribed to St. BARNABAS quotes Ecclesiasticus iv, 36.[2] St. POLYCARP († 160) cites Tobias iv, 11;[3] and St. ATHENAGORAS in his "Apology," presented to the emperor Marcus Aurelius about 177 A.D., quotes Baruch iii, 36, as the saying of a "prophet."[4] CLEMENT of Alexandria († 220 A.D.) uses the deutero- like the proto-canonical books for explanation and proof indiscriminately; he quotes Tobias as "Scripture," Baruch as "divine Scripture," Wisdom as written by Solomon, and consequently "divine," etc.[5] In this CLEMENT is faithfully followed by his most illustrious disciple, ORIGEN († 254 A.D.), who quotes as Holy Writ all the deutero-canonical writings, claims for the Church the right to admit into her Canon books which are rejected by the Jews, and expressly defends the reception among Christians of the books of Tobias and Judith, and of the additions to the books of Daniel and Esther.[6] DIONYSIUS of Alexandria, in the extant fragments of his works, cites Tobias, Ecclesiasticus, Wisdom, and Baruch.[7] Finally, St. METHODIUS († 311 A.D.), the Bishop of Tyre and adver-

[1] Cfr. BREEN, Introd. to Holy Scripture, p. 68 sq.; SAM. DAVIDSON, The Canon of the Bible, 3d edit., pp. 101, 103 sq.

[2] Epistle, chap. xix.

[3] Epistle to the Philippians, chap. x.

[4] Apology, chap. ix.

[5] Cfr. Pædag. B. II, chap. 3; Stromata B. II, chap. 23; B. IV, chap 6; B. II, chap. 15; B. II, chap. 7; etc.

[6] Cfr. Comm. in Joann.; Against Celsus, Book III, chap. 72, etc. etc.; also Epist. to Africanus. §§ 4. 5.

[7] On Nature against the Epicureans, fragm. 3. 5; *contra* Paulum Samos., q 1. 6. 9, 10.

sary of Origen, employs the deutero-canonical like the other writings of the Old Testament.[1]

In presence of this unanimous consent of Eastern and Western ecclesiastical writers, it is easy to understand how just are the following words of the late Protestant professor, REUSS: "The Christian theologians of this period knew the Old Testament only in its Greek form (in the Septuagint), and consequently they made no distinction between what we call canonical books (Hebrew) and apocryphal books (Greek). They quote both with the same confidence, with the same formulas of honor, and attribute to them an equal authority based on an equal inspiration." [2]

**3. Principal Difficulties Stated and Examined.** To offset this unanimous consent of the East and the West, recent Protestant writers have brought forward various arguments which we must now state and examine. We are told, for instance, by WESTCOTT [3] that "the quotations from the Old Testament in Justin . . . confirm exclusively the books of the Hebrew Bible. There is no quotation, I believe (in his works), of the *Apocrypha* of the Old Testament, though *Wisdom*, at least, would have fallen in with much of Justin's reasoning."

To this it may be answered (1) that the holy Doctor had hardly any natural occasion to quote the deutero-canonical books in his *Apologies* to the Roman emperor; (2) that in point of fact, as admitted by the Protestant writer KEIL,[4] "he used the Alexandrian additions to Daniel in his first Apology, chap. 46"; (3) that in his Dialogue with a Jew named Trypho St. Justin mentions several times his purpose to quote only those passages which are admitted by the Jews.[5]

The testimony of another apologetic writer, St. MELITO (fl. 170(?) A.D.), Bishop of Sardis, is also appealed to against the deutero-canonical writings. In his letter, which serves as a

[1] The Banquet of the Ten Virgins, 1st discourse, chap. iii.
[2] History of the Canon of Holy Scripture, p. 93, Engl. Transl.
[3] The Bible in the Church, p. 106, new edit., 1885.
[4] Introduction to the Old Test., vol. ii, p. 351, Engl. Transl.
[5] Dialogue with Trypho, chaps. 71, 120, 137.

preface to his collection of extracts from the Old Testament,[1] the holy bishop gives a list of the sacred books, of which he had learned the exact number and order when in the East, that is, in Palestine. This list includes all the books of the Hebrew Canon (except Esther), follows the same general order as the Greek Bible in their enumeration, and contains no deutero-canonical writing. From these facts two most important inferences, it is claimed, should be drawn: (1) "that the judgment of the East, or, in other words, of Palestine, was that which was held to be decisive on the contents of the Old Testament"; (2) that "Melito's list appears to be a catalogue of the books in the Palestinian Septuagint, the Greek Bible which was used by Our Lord and the Apostles." [2]

Quite a different construction, however, can and should be put on the words of the Bishop of Sardis. His collection of extracts from the Old Testament, having a polemical purpose against the Jews, was intended from the first to contain simply passages from "the Law and the Prophets," [3] and was naturally carried out only when he had ascertained to his full satisfaction "the books of the Old Testament" which the best-informed Jews, viz., those of Palestine, regarded as inspired. In his enumeration of the writings admitted as sacred by the Jews he does not follow "a Palestinian Septuagint," of which there is no trace in all the literature which refers to the Canon of the Old Testament, but simply adopts the order of books with which he himself and his correspondent, Onesimus, a Christian of Asia Minor, were familiar in the current copies of the Septuagint Version.[4] Finally, if he omitted purposely to mention the book of Esther, it was not because he personally rejected its sacred character on the authority of the Jews of Palestine, but because he did not find it admitted by the rabbis whom he consulted.[5]

It should be said, however, that some Catholic writers—among whom Vigouroux and Loisy—hold that St. Melito ac-

[1] EUSEBIUS, Ecclesiastical History, Book IV, chap. xxvi.

[2] WESTCOTT, The Bible in the Church, p. 124; cfr. also H. E. RYLE, The Canon of the Old Test., p. 208.

[3] Cfr. Melito's letter in Eusebius, loc. cit.

[4] This is precisely the case with Origen when he enumerates the books of the Hebrew Canon; cfr. EUSEBIUS, Eccles. Hist., Book VI, chap. 25.

[5] Cfr. H. E. RYLE, loc. cit., p. 204 sq.; WILDEBOER, The Origin of the Canon of the O. T., p. 176 sq.

cepted the Hebrew Canon on the authority of the Jews, and that, in doing so, he departed from the right tradition of the Christian churches.

This last remark applies in a special manner to the conduct of Origen. This illustrious Doctor gives practically the Hebrew Canon in the sole passages of his writings which contains a catalogue of the Scriptures of the Old Testament,[1] and further seems to make it his own in at least one passage of his Commentaries.[2] It is clearly impossible to read carefully these two passages and to compare them with the views of Origen stated above without feeling that here he is simply deviating from what had been, and was still in his time, the public and positive belief of the Church of Alexandria. That Church, like all those of the first three centuries, used the Greek Bible, and put exactly on the same level all the books it contained.

The last difficulty to be mentioned here is drawn from the following fact: Side by side with the deutero-canonical books of the Old Testament, several ecclesiastical writers of the first three centuries use freely and quote as *Holy Writ* such apocryphal productions as the book of Enoch, the third and fourth books of Esdras, etc. Does not this seem to imply that in the early Church both the deutero-canonical and the apocryphal books enjoyed the same authority and were placed indiscriminately in the same collection of sacred books?

Our answer is briefly this: History proves indeed that for some time several early writers of the Church used freely a few apocryphal books, but it proves also that at no time was any of these apocryphal writings received by all the Churches of the East and the West, and read in public services together with the canonical books.[3] This is the reason why these apocryphal productions soon fell into discredit, whilst the deutero-canonical writings continued in use side by side with the books of the Hebrew Bible.

[1] Cfr. Eusebius, Eccles. Hist., Book VI, chap. 25.

[2] Cfr. quotations from Origen in St. Jerome, on Daniel, chaps. xiii, xiv (Patr. Lat., vol. xxv).

[3] For detailed information about this point, see Loisy, Hist. du Canon de l'A. Test., pp. 79–83.

§ 3. *The Fourth Century and First Part of the Fifth Century.*

1. **Opposition to the Deutero-canonical Books.** Strange to say, the well-nigh perfect unanimity of the ecclesiastical writers of the first three centuries in favor of the deutero-canonical books was not kept up during the fourth century of our era. In the East and in the West several illustrious Doctors of the Church entertained serious doubts concerning the authority of the writings which were not found in the Hebrew Bible.[1]

This is the case with St. ATHANASIUS, who, in his 39th *Festal Epistle*,[2] sets forth "the books included in the Canon and handed down, and accredited as divine," and excludes from their number all the deutero-canonical writings of the Old Testament except Baruch.

This is the case also with St. GREGORY NAZIANZEN († 389), St. CYRIL of Jerusalem († 386), St. EPIPHANIUS († 403), the Synopsis Athanasiana; St. BASIL of Cæsarea († 379), the iambic metres ascribed to St. AMPHILOCHIUS of Iconium († 395), the 85th Canon of the Apostles, and the 60th decree of the Council of Laodicea (4th cent. A.D.).

Such are the Eastern documents which, in a more or less explicit manner, assign to the deutero-canonical books a rank inferior to those of the Hebrew Bible, and which are still described by most Protestant writers as the witnesses of history against the Catholic Canon. It is certain, however, that they simply express the theoretical views of their authors, for, in practice, those same authors use freely both the proto- and the deutero-canonical writings of the Old Testament, and apply to both exactly the same language.[3]

[1] The quotations from those ecclesiastical writers are given in the larger "Introduction" by the present writer, p. 51 sq.

[2] A *Festal Epistle* was a pastoral letter put forth by the Archbishops of Alexandria to make known each year the exact date of the Paschal festival. The 39th Epistle of St. Athanasius goes back most likely to 367 A.D. We have only fragments of it.

[3] For proofs of this, cfr. the larger "Introduction" by the present writer, p. 52 sq.

It was only natural that these speculative views so prevalent in the East should exercise some influence upon the mind of Western writers. The first in date among the latter is St. HILARY of Poitiers († 368), who in theory seems to have endorsed the views of ORIGEN regarding the Canon,[1] but who, in practice quoted both proto- and deutero-canonical books in exactly the same manner.[2]

The second Western opponent of the deutero-canonical books is RUFINUS († 410), a priest of Aquileia, in Northern Italy. In his commentary on the Symbol of the Apostles[3] he openly denies the canonical character of the books which are not found in the Hebrew Bible. Yet, despite his theory, he uses the deutero-canonical writings and treats them as divinely inspired Scriptures.

The last and by far most decided opponent of the deutero-canonical books in the West is SOPHRONIUS EUSEBIUS HIERONYMUS, better known under the name of St. JEROME († 420). Time and again, in his prefaces to his translations of the proto-canonical books, he rejects, in the most explicit manner, the authority of the books not found in the Hebrew Text,[4] and

[1] St. HILARY, Comm. on the Psalms (MIGNE, Patr. Lat., vol. ix, col. 241).

[2] For proofs, see larger "Introduction," p. 54.

[3] §§ 36–38 (MIGNE, P. L., vol. xxi, col. 374 sq.).

[4] In his preface to the books of Kings, written in 391, and usually referred to as the "*Prologus Galeatus*," he says: "This prologue to the Scriptures may suit as a helmed preface to all the books which we have rendered from Hebrew into Latin; that we may know that whatever is beyond these must be reckoned among the *Apocrypha*. Therefore, the Wisdom of Solomon, as it is commonly entitled, and the book of the son of Sirach (Ecclesiasticus) and Judith, and Tobias, and the Shepherd are not in the Canon" (MIGNE, P. L., vol. xxviii, col. 555 sq.).—In his preface to Esdras (394 A.D.) he writes: "Let no one be astonished that we edited only one book (of Esdras); nor let him delight in the dreams found in the 3d and 4th apocryphal books of Esdras. For among the Hebrews the works of Esdras and Nehemias are united in one book, and what is not found in them and among the 24 old men (i.e., the 24 books of the Hebrew Canon) should be put aside and kept at a considerable distance from them" (P. L., vol. xxviii, col. 1403).—In 398 A.D. he writes in his preface to the works of Solomon: "Moreover, there is the work *παναρετος* of Jesus, the son of Sirach, and another pseudepigraph which is entitled the Wisdom of Solomon. . . . As the Church reads the books of Judith and Tobias, and of the Machabees,

treats the deutero-canonical additions to Esther and Daniel with a sort of contempt.[1] Baruch he openly declines to render into Latin,[2] and if he does translate the book of Tobias, it is "not to disobey the orders of bishops."[3] His private letters are, if anything, stronger than his statements in works destined to the public, so that his full mind is perfectly ascertained.[4] Finally, he is the sole Father on record as quoting sometimes the deutero-canonical books with a restriction concerning their canonical value. Thus, in his commentary on Jonas (about 397) he quotes the book of Tobias "liceat not habeatur in Canone, tamen quia usurpatur ab ecclesiasticis viris."[5] Again, in his commentary on Aggeus he cites a passage of Judith with the remark: "Si quis tamen vult librum recipere mulieris."[6]

Usually, however, he quotes the deutero-canonical writings in the same manner as the other sacred books. "In his letter to Eustochium, Sirach iii, 33 comes between citations from Matthew and Luke, and is introduced by 'which is written,'

but does not receive them among the canonical Scriptures, so also it reads these two books for the edification of the people, but not for the confirmation of revealed doctrine" (P. L., vol. xxviii, col. 1242 sq.).

[1] The additions to Esther he qualifies as superfluous adjuncts and oratorical amplifications (P. L., vol. xxviii, col. 1433 sq.), and the fragments of Daniel have for him "nothing of the authority which attaches to Holy Writ" (P. L., vol. xxviii, col. 1292 sqq.).

[2] MIGNE, P. L., vol. xxv, cols. 492, 493.

[3] MIGNE, P. L., vol. xxix, col. 24 sp.

[4] In his letter to Paulinus (about 394 A.D.) he draws up a catalogue of the Old Testament, without even mentioning the deutero-canonical books (P., L., vol. xxii, col. 545 sq.); and as late as 403 A.D., writing to Læta, he mentions first the various books of Holy Writ in the order he wishes that her daughter should peruse them, and then adds: "Let her distrust all the apocryphal books. If, however, she desires to read them, not indeed to draw from them arguments in favor of Christian doctrines, but simply for the sake of the miracles therein recorded, let her understand that they are not the work of those whose name they bear, that many mischievous things have crept into them, and that the utmost prudence is necessary to seek for gold in the mud" (P. L., vol. xxii, col. 876 sq.).

[5] MIGNE, P. L., vol. xxv, col. 1119.

[6] MIGNE, Patr. Lat., vol. xxv, col. 1394. See also a quotation from Wisdom in his Comm. on Zachary (P. L., vol. xxv, col. 1465).

in a letter to Pammachius, whilst xxii, 6 of the same book has 'divine Scripture' applied to it. Ruth, Esther, and Judith are spoken of as 'holy volumes.' "[1]

It is plain, therefore, as admitted by Corluy, S.J., Loisy, etc.,[2] that, as in the case of the other opponents of the deutero-canonical books, the practice of St. Jerome differs from his theory.

**2. Arguments in Favor of the Deutero-canonical Books.** Whatever reasons may be set forth to explain this theoretical deviation from tradition on the part of the illustrious Doctors of the fourth century to whom we have just referred,[3] it remains true that the practical use which they make of the deutero-canonical books goes right against their speculative views. In theory they claim a higher authority for the books of the Hebrew Bible; in practice they quote indiscriminately (except at times St. Jerome) from both the proto- and the deutero-canonical writings, and apply to them all the sacred name of *Scripture*. They know "of a Jewish and a Christian Canon in relation to the Old Testament; the latter wider than the former; their private opinion being more favorable to the one, though the other was historically transmitted."[4] It would therefore be difficult to find a stronger proof that the Alexandrian Canon still continued to be the one found in the Bible which was commonly used and quoted in the Christian Church.[5]

A second proof is the positive and direct testimony of the catalogues of canonical books which were drawn up during this same period. One of these, recently published (in 1886), goes back to about the middle of the fourth century A.D. It claims to be "a list of the *canonical* books of the Old Testament," and it enumerates both the proto- and the deutero-

[1] Samuel DAVIDSON, Canon of the Bible, p. 291 sq.
[2] For a different view, see FRANZELIN and CORNELY.
[3] These reasons are well given by LOISY, Canon de l'A. T., pp. 121–124.
[4] Samuel DAVIDSON, loc. cit., p. 171 sq.
[5] Cfr. CORLUY, S.J., in JAUGEY, Dict. Apologetique, art. Canon, p. 368 sq.

canonical books. A second list, a little later in date, but of greater importance because of its official character, is that which was framed in the Council of Hippo in 393, and was promulgated over again by the Third and Sixth Councils of Carthage, held in 397 and 419 respectively (cfr. DENZINGER, Enchiridion Symbolorum et Definitionum).

The last official catalogue of the Western Church to be mentioned here in favor of the deutero-canonical books is that sent by St. Innocent I. in 405 A.D. to St. Exsuperius, Bishop of Toulouse in Gaul. As he had consulted the Sovereign Pontiff about "the books admitted in the Canon," he received from him a list which comprised all the writings of the Alexandrian Canon.[1]

Equally explicit catalogues cannot be pointed out on the part of the Eastern Church. Two things, however, are well known as favorable to the deutero-canonical books. First, the Greek churches continue to the Septuagint Version with its full Canon,[2] and next, as stated above, their leading writers ever quote as *Scripture* both classes of books.

A last argument in favor of the deutero-canonical books is drawn from the usage made of them by the Syrian Fathers, notably by St. CHRYSOSTOM († 407) and THEODORET († about 458), the two greatest representatives of the Antiochian school. "They use the apocryphal (i.e., the deutero-canonical) books freely, and without distinguishing them from the books of the Hebrew Canon. Thus Chrysostom, to take only one example, quotes passages from *Baruch*, *Ecclesiasticus*, and *Wisdom* as divine Scripture." [3]

[1] Cfr. MIGNE, P. L., vol. XX, col. 501 sq.

[2] This is proved by the contents of the Greek manuscripts of that period, such as the *Vaticanus*, the *Sinaiticus*, the *Alexandrinus*, and the *Ephræmiticus*, and also by the contents of the *Æthiopic* and *Armenian* versions of Holy Writ which were made from Greek manuscripts.

[3] WESTCOTT, The Bible in the Church, p. 175. As regards *Aphraates* (about 340 A.D.) and St. *Ephrem* († 378), see LOISY, Canon de l'A. T. pp. 109, 110, and CHAUVIN, Leçons d'Introduction, p. 118 sq.

## SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTER III.

### The Canon of the Old Testament in the Christian Church.

*Section II. From the Middle of the Fifth Century to our Day.*

- **I. From the Middle of the Fifth Century to the Tenth Century.**
  - In the East, especially among the Greeks (the Trullan Council).
  - In the West (Italy; Transalpine Countries; North Africa).
- **II. The Middle Ages.**
  - The twofold opinion current in the Western Church; how accounted for.
  - The Council of Florence.
- **III. From the Sixteenth Century to our Day.**
  - 1. Beginning of the Sixteenth Century.
    - Opposition of some Catholic scholars to the deutero-canonical books.
    - Views of the reformers concerning the Canon and deutero-canonical books.
  - 2. The Council of Trent.
    - The question of the Canon examined and settled.
    - Its decree fully justified by a retrospect.
  - 3. Since the Council of Trent:
    - Attitude of Catholics.
      - General acceptance of deutero-canonical books, yet isolated opposition to them.
    - Action of Protestants.
      - Public Confessions and theological works.
      - Orthodox and Rationalistic schools of nineteenth century.

# CHAPTER III.

## THE CANON OF THE OLD TESTAMENT IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

## Section II. From the Middle of the Fifth Century to our Day.

### § 1. *From the Middle of the Fifth Century to the Tenth Century.*

**1. The Canon in the East.** The leading facts to be noticed here are: (1) that the two great Oriental sects known in history as the Nestorians and the Monophysites have kept both the proto- and the deutero-canonical books ever since their separation from the Church in the fifth century; (2) that towards the end of the seventh century the Council *in Trullo* laid down positions which gradually fixed the Canon for the Greeks on the basis of the Alexandrian Canon; (3) that, as might well be expected, a few Doctors of the East, viz., Leontius of Byzantium (about 600 A.D.), St. John Damascene († 754), and Nicephorus, Patriarch of Constantinople († 828), borrowing their theoretical views from the great Fathers of the fourth century, gave an incomplete canon of the Old Testament.

**2. The Canon in the West.** Owing to the fact that only a few Western writers had been influenced in the preceding century by the Eastern opponents of the deutero-canonical books, and that it took a considerable time for the views of St. Jerome to tell effectively against the books not found in the Hebrew Bible, the tradition of the Church was kept even more faithfully, during this period, in the West than in the East. Until the ninth century, papal lists,[1] contents of manuscripts,[2] eccle-

[1] Those ascribed to Popes St. Hilary († 468), St. Gelasius († 496), St. Hormisdas († 523).

[2] Such as the *Amiatinus*, the *Toletanus*, etc.

siastical writings, whether of Italy, Spain, or England,[1] witness generally in favor of the full Alexandrian Canon. It seems, however, that St. Gregory the Great († 604)[2] and Primasius, Bishop of Adrumetum,[3] were influenced by Jerome's views against the deutero-canonical books. Gradually these same views gained ground in the Western Church, and their admission into the *Glossa Ordinaria* of Walafrid Strabo († 849) gave them a currency sure to tell powerfully, and in a near future, against the full Alexandrian Canon.

## § 2. *The Middle Ages.*

**1. The Twofold Opinion Current in the Western Church.** Many things contributed to cause a large number of Doctors of the Middle Ages[4] to side with St. Jerome against the deutero-canonical writings. His *Prologus Galeatus* had become the necessary introduction to every manuscript of the Vulgate, and his prefaces to the other books were also extensively circulated, and read together with the sacred text. Nay, more: as they had been composed by the greatest Biblical scholar of the past, by the writer best acquainted with the ancient traditions of the East and of the West, by a saint whom God had raised to supply His Church with a version of Holy Writ, and whom, as many supposed, the Holy Spirit had guided in a special manner in translating the Old Testament, they at times shared to some extent in the reverence borne to the word of God. Their authority appeared supreme in the eyes of many who thought it allowable to embrace the views therein contained in the teeth of contrary practice in the Church, and of disciplinary decrees of the Popes, all the more so because by means of subtle distinctions in fashion at the time, they could easily see their way to reconcile the statements of Jerome, in his prefaces, with those papal decrees and the practice of the Church.

[1] Those of Dionysius Exiguus († 536) and Cassiodorus († 562), in Italy; of St. Isidore of Seville († 636), St. Eugenius of Toledo († 657), St. Ildefonsus of Toledo († 669), in Spain; of Ven. Bede († 735), in England; etc.

[2] Cfr. Migne, P. L., vol. lxxvii, col. 119. The view adopted in the text is that of Vigouroux, Trochon, Loisy, etc.

[3] Cfr. Migne, P. L., vol. lxviii, col. 818.

[4] The best-known among them are: Notker († 912); Rupert († 1135); Hugo of St. Victor († 1140); Peter the Venerable († 1156); John of Salisbury († 1180); Card. Hugo, a S. Caro, O.S.B. († 1263); Nicholas of Lyra, O.S.F. († 1263); William Ockham († 1347); etc.

Side by side with these numerous opponents of the deutero-canonical books there were no less numerous defenders of their full canonical authority.[1] The latter set Augustine's authority [2] over against that of Jerome, appealed to the Papal decrees as clearly in their favor, urged the constant liturgical, doctrinal, and exegetical use of those writings in exactly the same manner as the books found in the Hebrew Bible, and strenuously maintained that to the Church alone, and not to any one of her Doctors, belonged the right to declare which books made up the Christian Canon, and that she had plainly and repeatedly counted among her canonical books others besides those of the Hebrew Text.

**2. The Council of Florence.** It was this tradition of the Church which was solemnly proclaimed in the Council of Florence, when Eugenius IV., with the approval of the Fathers of that assembly, declared all the books then found in the Latin Bibles to be inspired by the same Holy Spirit, without distinguishing them into two classes or categories. As, however, the bull of Eugenius IV. did not deal with the *canonicity* of the books which were not in the Hebrew Text, but simply proclaimed their *inspiration*, some ecclesiastical writers, such as TOSTAT († 1455), St. ANTONINUS of Florence († 1459), and DIONYSIUS the Carthusian († 1471), still maintained after the close of the Council of Florence the views of St. Jerome against the deutero-canonical writings.

### § 3. *From the Sixteenth Century to Our Day.*

**1. Beginning of the Sixteenth Century.** As in the latter part of the preceding century, so in the beginning of the sixteenth century do we find some Catholic scholars opposed to the deutero-canonical books. The first among these is

[1] The principal defenders of the deutero-canonical books were: LUITPRAND († 972); BURCHARDT (about 1020); GRATIAN († 1155); St. STEPHEN HARDING, and GISLEBERT (beginning of 12th cent.); PETER of Riga, and GILLES of Paris (end of 12th cent.); Stephen LANGTON, St. BONAVENTURA, and Albertus MAGNUS (in the 13th cent.); etc.

[2] Cfr. On Christian Doctrine, Book II, chap. viii.

Card. XIMENES († 1517), who, in the preface to his magnificent edition of the Bible in several languages called the *Polyglot* of Ximenes, reproduces the passages of St. Jerome against the books not found in the Hebrew Bible. A second opponent is the celebrated humanist ERASMUS († 1536), whose vague expressions on the matter are due exclusively to his desire not to compromise himself in the eyes of his ecclesiastical superiors. Far less guarded are the words of his contemporary, the Dominican THOMAS de Vio, better known under the name of Card. CAJETAN († 1534): he goes so far as to declare that "the language of Councils and Doctors must alike be revised by the judgment of Jerome; and according to his opinion those books . . . are not canonical in the sense of establishing points of faith," etc.

Meantime, LUTHER († 1546) and the other early reformers—ZWINGLI († 1531), ŒCOLAMPADIUS († 1531), BODENDSTEIN of Carlstadt († 1541), and CALVIN († 1564) — were taking a most radical stand against the deutero-canonical books. In their desire to do away with every authority distinct from Holy Writ, they claimed that, independently of Church and tradition, a book proves itself to the regenerated man as truly containing the word of God, and worthy to be numbered among the canonical Scriptures. Each one, according to Luther, can judge of the canonical character of a book by the value of its teachings concerning God and man's salvation; that is to say, by its degree of conformity with the system of justification by faith alone. Calvin, on the other hand, maintains that "the authority of Scripture is to be grounded on something higher than human reasonings or proofs or conjectures, viz., on the inner witness of the Holy Spirit." [1] As might well be expected, these new tests of canonicity have proved to be insufficient in practice: "The later Lutherans abandoned the teaching of their great master on the written

[1] Cfr. REUSS, History of the Canon of Holy Scripture, p. 302 (Engl. Transl.).

Word,"[1] and "those who formulated the theory of the inward witness of the Holy Spirit were the first to diverge from it, and to drift into strange inconsistencies."[2]

Whatever may be thought of the practical value of these tests of canonicity, it is beyond doubt that the early reformers and their associates rejected from the first, and with remarkable unanimity, all the deutero-canonical books and parts of books of the Old Testament. Still they kept them in their editions of the Bible, not daring to exclude them altogether; in presence of the usage and tradition of past ages, they deemed it advisable to make a compromise between theory and practice, and in so far were the unwilling witnesses to the faith and reverence which these books had ever enjoyed in the Church before the Reformation. In the Protestant German and French Bibles these books were placed apart, with a special collective title, and usually with notices stating some ground for denying their inspiration and refusing them the title of canonical.[3]

**2. The Council of Trent.** One of the first questions dealt with by the Fathers of the Council of Trent was that "of the Reception of the Sacred Books." In their general meetings they soon agreed "that no distinction should be made among the sacred books,"[4] and that "they should be received purely and simply, and enumerated as in the Council of Florence, without stating the grounds in their favor."[5] Having thus determined in a general way "the manner in which the books of Holy Writ should be received," they took up the discussion of a project of decree: "On the Reception of the Sacred Books and Apostolical Traditions." Its wording was sharply

[1] Westcott, The Bible in the Church, p. 265.

[2] Reuss, loc. cit., p. 306.

[3] Some of those notices ran as follows: "Here are the books which are not numbered by the ancients among the Biblical writings and which are not found in the Hebrew Canon"; "Apocrypha, that is, books which are not held as of equal authority with Holy Writ, but which are useful and good for reading", etc.

[4] Cfr. A. Theiner, Acta Genuina Concil. Trident., p. 51 sq.

[5] Cfr. A. Theiner, loc. cit., p. 52 sq.

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criticised in many places, and the text was settled at each step in accordance with the vote of the majority. On April 8th, 1546, the decree was voted in the fourth solemn session of the Council. It ran as follows:

"The sacred and holy, œcumenical, and general Synod of Trent . . . keeping this always in view, that errors being removed, the purity itself of the Gospel be preserved in the Church, . . . and seeing clearly that this truth . . . is contained in the written books . . . ; following the examples of the orthodox Fathers, receives and venerates with an equal feeling of piety (*pari pictatis affectu*) and reverence all the books of the Old and of the New Testament, seeing that God is the Author of both. . . .

"And it has thought it meet that a list of the sacred books be inserted in this decree, lest a doubt may arise in any one's mind, which are the books that are received by this Synod. They are as set down here below:

"Of the Old Testament: The five books of Moses . . . Josue, Judges, Ruth, four books of Kings, two of Paralipomenon, the first book of Esdras, and the second which is entitled Nehemias; Tobias, Judith, Esther, Job, the Davidic Psalter; the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, the Canticle of Canticles, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Isaias, Jeremias, with Baruch; Ezechiel, Daniel; the twelve minor prophets . . . ; two books of the Machabees, the first and the second. . . .

. . . . . .

"But if any one receive not as sacred and canonical the said books entire with all their parts, and as they have been used to be read in the Catholic Church and as they are contained in the old Latin Vulgate edition, . . . let him be anathema.

"Let all, therefore, understand . . . what testimonies and authorities (*præsidiis*) the said Synod will mainly use in confirming dogmas, and in restoring morals in the Church." [1]

By this dogmatic decree the Fathers of Trent defined the canonicity of the deutero-canonical books and parts of books of the Old Testament, and did away with every difference in

[1] We have quoted only those passages of the decree which have a reference to the books of the Old Testament.

EX LIBRIS PROVINCIAE
PRO STUDIO THEOL.

that respect between them and the books found in the Hebrew Bible. Leaving aside the question whether the sacred books differ from one another in other respects, such as, for instance, their usefulness for proving dogma,[1] they solemnly declare that all the books of the Catholic Bible being inspired must be "received as sacred and canonical." As agreed upon in their meetings, they simply enumerate the books as had been done in the Council of Florence, and their list is identical with that of Eugenius IV. Finally, it is plain, both from their previous meetings and from their final wording of the decree, that the Fathers of Trent simply wish to affirm solemnly, against the errors of the time, the ancient faith of the Church concerning the books of Holy Writ.

Viewed from this standpoint, the decree of Trent must ever appear fully justified in the light of impartial history. As was shown briefly in the foregoing pages, the deutero-canonical books were never treated in the Christian Church as mere human compositions. From the Apostolic Age down to the middle of the fifth century they were used in public services, quoted in the same manner as the proto-canonical books, called *Holy Scripture*, and ecclesiastical tradition became gradually so strong in their favor that St. Jerome himself turned out to be its real, though unwilling, witness. So was it likewise in the following centuries and throughout the Middle Ages, despite the powerful influence of St. Jerome's views upon the minds of many ecclesiastical writers of that period. So was it, finally, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, when, as we have seen, even the early reformers thought it advisable to make a compromise between theory

[1] This, we think, may be inferred from their express intention "to leave the question of a distinction among the sacred books as it had been left by the Holy Fathers," and also from their substituting the expression *pari pietatis affectu* for the word *æqualiter* in the framing of the decree, because "there is a great difference among them," i.e., among the sacred books.

and practice, and not to reject absolutely from their Bibles books which the tradition of ages had surrounded with so much faith and reverence. And let it be borne in mind that, in appealing to tradition as a sure means of determining which books were really inspired and hence canonical, the Fathers of Trent resorted to no new test of canonicity that would suit a purpose of theirs—as was done by the leaders of the Reformation—but simply used a standard that we have seen applied as early as Origen.

**3. Since the Council of Trent.** As might naturally be expected, the decree of the Council of Trent was readily accepted by Catholic scholars at large. It was the authentic expression of the mind of the universal Church, "the pillar and ground of the truth," [1] and as such it deserved all the reverence and submission due to the solemn utterances of an infallible authority.

It cannot be denied, however, that even after this dogmatic decision of the Council of Trent a few Catholic writers thought it still allowable to maintain a real difference in respect of canonicity between the sacred books of the Old Testament. This was the case with MELCHIOR CANUS († 1550) in reference to Baruch,[2] with SIXTUS of Sienna († 1569) and ELLIES DUPIN († 1719) in reference to the fragments of Esther.[3] Indeed, BERNARD LAMY († 1714) went so far as to say: "Libri qui in secundo canone sunt, licet conjuncti cum ceteris primi canonis, tamen non sunt ejusdem auctoritati," [4] and his view was endorsed by JAHN († 1816) at the beginning of the nineteenth century.[5]

Whilst the difference between proto- and deutero-canonical

[1] I Tim. iii, 15.
[2] De Locis Theologicis, lib. ii, cap. ix, Conclusio 1.
[3] Cfr. LOISY, loc. cit., pp. 221 sq., 226 sq.
[4] Cfr. CHAUVIN, Leçons d'Introduction Générale, p. 149.
[5] Introduction to the Old Testament, § 30, p. 48 sq. (Engl. Transl.).

books was slowly dying away among Catholics it was sedulously kept up among Protestants in their public Confessions of faith of the second part of the sixteenth century, notably in the Gallican Confession of 1559 A.D.; in the Anglican Confession of 1562 A.D. (art. vi); and in the Second Helvetic Confession of 1566 A.D.[1] As time went on, new and at times ridiculous arguments were set forth by Protestant divines to justify this distinction between the two classes of books.[2] Nothing was neglected to make the deutero-canonical books appear utterly worthless and contemptible. Yet they were retained in the Bibles of all the Protestant sects down to the year 1826, when the British Bible Society began to issue copies of the word of God from which the Apocrypha had been excluded. The example thus given was not followed at once by the Protestant sects of the European continent. There the orthodox schools were most anxious to maintain the Canon pretty much in the same condition as at the time of the first leaders of the Reformation. In their eyes, as in those of the Protestant divines of the last centuries, only the books of the Hebrew Bible should be considered as inspired and belonging to the Canon, but the others may be profitable for reading and should not be entirely set aside. Since 1850, however, almost all the Protestant sects have gradually given up the practice of publishing the "Apocrypha," and it is well known that the English *Revised Version*, published in 1885, appeared without so much as a reference to them.

Side by side with these more or less conservative schools of Protestant theology, there are Rationalistic schools whose principles may be traced back substantially to the work of the German critic SEMLER († 1791), entitled "Essay on a

[1] Cfr. Philip SCHAFF, Creeds of Christendom, vol. iii, pp. 361, 490, 238.

[2] Cfr. REUSS' strong remarks in that connection (Canon of the Holy Script., pp. 359–361). They are quoted in the complete edition of the "General Introduction" by the present writer (pp. 83, 84).

Free Examination of the Canon."[1] According to him the Canon is simply the list of books read in the ancient Church for the edification of the people, and the criterion of canonicity consists in the practical utility to be derived from each book. Willingly would he have removed from the Canon the books of Esther, Judith, the Canticle of Canticles, and the Apocalypse, because of their not coming up to his standard of morality.[2] Since Semler, many Rationalists have given up all notion of a Canon, inasmuch as they look upon the Old Testament simply as the collection of the extant writings of the Jewish people, and have no manner of concern with the question whether this or that particular book of the Bible should be considered as authoritative in matters of faith and morals. Others, who still speak of the Canon in exactly the same sense as Semler, judge of the canonical character of a book by the sublimity and purity of its doctrinal and moral teachings, and express freely their regret that certain writings, as, for instance, Ecclesiastes, should be kept in the Christian Canon.

The position assumed by Rationalists is, of course, the farthest removed from revealed Catholic truth. It cannot be denied, however, that their independent investigation of the history of the Canon has led them many a time to proclaim the untenableness of the Protestant theories and the soundness of the Catholic position as far as the data of history are concerned.[3]

[1] Abhandlung von freien Untersuchung des Canon (1771–1775).

[2] Cfr. Loisy, loc. cit., p. 252.

[3] This is very particularly the case with the works of Reuss and S. Davidson so often referred to in the foregoing pages.

## SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTER IV.

### History of the Canon of the New Testament.

**I. The Age of the New Testament Writers.**

1. Preaching, not writing, the ordinary method of spreading the Gospel.
2. Yet inspired writings composed and diffused.
3. Traces of primitive collections.

**II. The First Three Centuries.**

1. The Apostolic Fathers.
   - How they consider the writings of the New Testament.
   - Books with which they seem acquainted.
2. Testimony of the principal Apologists, and of the early Heretics.
3. Ecclesiastical writers of the West and of the East.

**III. From the Fourth Century to our Time.**

- Western Churches.
  - Before the Council of Florence.
  - The Council of Trent.
- Eastern Churches.
  - Lack of unity in the fourth century.
  - The Trullan Council and after.
- Protestant Sects.
  - Schools and confessions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.
  - Orthodox and Rationalistic schools of the nineteenth century.

## CHAPTER IV.

### HISTORY OF THE CANON OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

#### § 1. *The Age of the New Testament Writers.*

**1. Preaching, not Writing, the Ordinary Method of Spreading the Gospel.** One of the leading features of the age of the New Testament writers consists in the fact that in their eyes, and in those of their Christian contemporaries, preaching, not writing, was the regular method of spreading the Gospel. Christ's mission here below had been to preach "the Gospel of the kingdom of God,"[1] and this same mission He had entrusted to His chosen disciples, saying: "As the Father hath sent Me, I also send you";[2] "going therefore, teach ye all nations."[3] Conscious of their sublime mission, the Apostles considered it their supreme duty "to speak the things which they had seen and heard,"[4] and not to burden themselves with other occupations which, however useful, would interfere materially with "the ministry of the Word."[5]

So was it also with the great Apostle of the Gentiles. Paul was called to the Apostolate for no other purpose than to preach the Gospel,[6] and this was a most imperative duty in his eyes, for, says he: "Woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel . . . for a dispensation is committed to me."[7]

[1] Mark i, 14; Luke iv, 43.
[2] John xx, 21.
[3] Matt. xxviii, 19. Cfr. Acts i, 8.
[4] Acts iv, 19, 20; x, 42.
[5] Acts vi, 2, 4.
[6] Acts ix, 15; xxii, 15; xxvi, 16, 17; Rom. i, 1; I Cor. i, 17.
[7] I Cor. ix, 16, 17.

Further, it stands to reason that oral teaching, accompanied "with signs and wonders,"[1] could alone implant the faith among illiterate men such as were the first converts generally.[2] In like manner, only oral teaching could truly preserve the Christian faith among them after they had embraced it;[3] and this is why we see the Apostles and their successors continuing to visit the churches they had founded,[4] or setting over them faithful men capable of keeping up the teaching of the Apostles after their departure.[5]

Finally, "the numerous terms used in the New Testament to designate the teaching of the Apostles express, without exception, the idea of oral instruction."[6]

**2. Yet Inspired Writings Composed and Diffused.** Although oral teaching was, in the age of the New Testament writers, what it ever remained in the Church of God, viz., the ordinary means of spreading the Gospel, it was only natural that, during the same period, inspired writings should be composed for the use of the early Christians. One might naturally expect, for instance, that the ardent zeal of St. Paul should urge him to send letters to his recent converts, either to encourage them in their faith, or to warn them against perverse teachers, or to correct false notions, or to condemn nascent abuses, etc. It was only natural, too, that while the principal deeds and teachings of Jesus were recounted by the first preachers of Christianity, literate believers should be desirous to possess written records of the same, and that such Gospels as our Synoptic Gospels should be gradually composed.[7]

[1] I Thess. i, 5; Acts xv, 12; xix, 6, 11.
[2] I Cor. i, 26; II Thess. iii, 11.
[3] II Thess. ii, 14.
[4] Acts xv, 36.
[5] Acts xiv, 21, 22; I Tim. iii; I Cor. xvi, 15; II Tim. ii, 2; etc.
[6] Reuss, History of the Canon of Holy Scripture, p. 19 (Engl. Transl.).
[7] The questions connected with the Origin, Date, Authorship, etc., of the

Of these various writings, the Epistles of St. Paul, at least those which were directed to particular churches, were in the best position for acquiring at once authority and for being rapidly disseminated. The other inspired writings of this period, such as our canonical Gospels, the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Catholic Epistles, etc., were apparently composed for a less definite circle of readers, and hence they had probably to overcome greater obstacles to their reception and diffusion. It is likely enough, however, that the contents of our Gospels, together with the reverence which the early Christians had for the authors whose names they bear, secured for these sketches of Christ's life and teachings a fairly rapid and extensive circulation. In point of fact, a careful comparison of the text of our canonical Gospels leads to the two following conclusions: (1) the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark were most likely among the current records of Our Lord's life, which St. Luke utilized in the composition of his own Gospel;[1] (2) the first two Gospels—and perhaps all the three Synoptists—were already known to the large circle of readers for whom our fourth Gospel was written.

In connection with the Catholic Epistles, it is supposed that the resemblances between the Epistle to the Romans and that of St. James, between the Epistle of St. Jude and the second Epistle of St. Peter, point also to their comparatively rapid diffusion.[2]

**3. Traces of Primitive Collections.** If we bear in mind the principal circumstances in the midst of which the writings of the New Testament were at first circulated, we shall find it easy to understand why no general collection of these inspired books was made during the Apostolic Age. Not only were

Gospels and of the other New Testament writings will be dealt with in our forthcoming volume on *Introduction to the New Testament.*

[1] Luke i, 1–3.

[2] Cfr. Loisy, Histoire du Canon du Nouveau Testament, pp. 10–14.

these writings composed at different times and dispersed to widely different places, but they were circulated while a collection of sacred books, viz., those of the Old Testament, was already in possession of the field. As long as this first collection, coupled with the Apostolic oral teaching still fresh in the memory of the faithful, would appear a sufficient rule of faith and morals, it was not likely that a second collection of inspired writings should be desired. Again, throughout the Apostolic Age there was a prevalent expectation of the speedy return of Our Lord, and this would naturally preclude the wish for a second collection of sacred writings.

Meantime, however, divine Providence was watching over the various elements of a complete Canon of the New Testament, and preparing the way for their final gathering into one body of writings no less authoritative than those of the Old Testament. This providential means consisted in the partial collections which individual churches were able to make of writings directly addressed to them, or communicated by the neighboring Christian communities, or reaching them through visiting missionaries. All such collections were, of course, prized very highly and preserved carefully; they also formed as many distinct units whose genuineness could generally be shown, so that they were truly ready to enter as integral parts into the full Canon of the New Testament.

The formation of these partial collections was so natural under the circumstances of the time that all scholars grant it must have taken place, although only one trace—and even one which is not absolutely clear—of such a collection occurs in the whole New Testament.[1] The variations which existed for a long time between the Canon of the New Testament as admitted by the various churches seem also to point to collections which were incomplete from the outset. As the primitive collections contained only a limited number of

[1] II Peter iii, 15, 16. Cfr. Loisy, loc. cit., p. 12.

the sacred writings, and these not always the same, it was only natural that doubts should arise later regarding the authorship, and consequently also regarding the inspiration, of some one or other of the New Testament writings. In point of fact, several books, viz., the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Epistle of St. James, the second Epistle of St. Peter, the second and third Epistles of St. John, the Epistle of St. Jude, and the Apocalypse, were the object of considerable doubts during the following centuries, and on that account they are usually called by Catholics the *deutero-canonical* books of the New Testament.[1]

## § 2. *The First Three Centuries.*

**1. The Apostolic Fathers.** (Between 90 and 130 A.D.) One of the most important facts connected with the early transmission of the writings of the New Testament consists in the line of separation which the Apostolic Fathers draw between their own writings and those of the founders of the Christian Church. Not only do they recognize the latter as issuing from men invested with a dignity much higher than their own, but they even seem to consider all such writings as in no sense inferior to the sacred books of the Old Testament. This is probably the case with St. CLEMENT of Rome († 100 A.D.),[2] with St. IGNATIUS Martyr († 107 A.D.),[3] with the writer of the Epistle usually ascribed to St. BARNABAS,[4] and finally with St. POLYCARP.[5]

In view of the supreme authority ascribed by these and other Apostolic Fathers to the literary productions of the founders of Christianity, the question of determining the books

[1] A few passages of St. Mark (xvi, 9–20), St. Luke (xxii, 43, 44), and St. John (vii, 53–viii, 11) are also deutero-canonical.

[2] I Epist. to the Corinthians, chap. xlvii.

[3] Epist. to the Philadelphians, chap. v. Cfr. also Epist. to the Smyrnæans, chaps. v, vii, and Epist. to the Romans, chap. iv.

[4] Epist. of St. Barnabas, chap. iv.

[5] Epist. to the Philippians, chaps. iii, xii.

of the New Testament with which early Church writers show themselves acquainted assumes a special importance. But although this topic has been much examined by recent scholars, considerable uncertainty still prevails concerning it,[1] chiefly because, while the Apostolic Fathers seem to use this or that particular book of the New Testament, they do not refer to it by name, nor cite its words strictly. We think, however, that when the whole evidence which has come down to us from the time of the Apostolic Fathers is carefully weighed it bears out the following conclusions:

(1) By the year 130 A.D., our four canonical Gospels were extensively circulated, and formed so well defined a collection that at no later date do we find any doubt among ecclesiastical writers regarding the precise number of the Gospels received by the Church; (2) in the first quarter of the second century the Epistles of St. Paul are not only well known in the great Christian centres of the Roman world, but some expressions of St. Clement and St. Polycarp seem to imply that a general collection of St. Paul's Epistles had already been made; (3) it is not unlikely that in those early days the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles of St. John were usually received together with the Gospels of St. Luke and of St. John, respectively; (4) finally, the Epistle to the Hebrews was considered in Alexandria as the genuine work of St. Paul, and if we except the second Epistle of St. Peter, the Epistle of St. James, and especially that of St. Jude, all our canonical writings of the New Testament were clearly known to some one or other of the early churches.[2]

**2. Testimony of the Principal Apologists and of the Early Heretics.** As a powerful confirmation of the positions

[1] Cfr. SANDAY, Inspiration, Lectures vi, vii.

[2] For detailed information, see LOISY, loc. cit., pp. 14–46, and SALMON, Introduction to the New Testament, 8th edit., p. 359 sq. For a different view, see DAVIDSON, Canon of the Bible; REUSS, History of the Sacred Scriptures of the New Testament, etc.

just assumed, we may adduce at once the testimony of the leading apologists, who followed closely on the Apostolic Fathers. Foremost among them stands St. JUSTIN († about 163 A.D.), whose apologetic works are the earliest extant, and whose testimony in favor of our canonical Gospels is most valuable: it is now admitted as conclusive by all scholars worthy of the name, and it proves that even some time before St. Justin our Gospels had been considered as authoritative by the Christian Church.[1] Of the other writings of the New Testament, the Apocalypse is the only one about which St. Justin gives distinct information,[2] but it is beyond doubt that he used the Epistles of St. Paul, and indeed all the other canonical books except the Epistle of St. Jude, the second Epistle of St. Peter, the second and third Epistles of St. John.

St. DIONYSIUS, Bishop of Corinth at the time of the martyrdom of St. Justin, speaks of "the Scriptures of the Lord," whereby he means the writings of the New Testament, which then formed a well-defined and sacred collection.[3]

The last Christian Apologist to be mentioned here is St. THEOPHILUS of Antioch (about 180 A.D.), who, in his writings, shows himself familiar with the Gospels and most of St. Paul's Epistles, as also the Apocalypse.

Contemporary with these great champions of orthodoxy, whose testimony gives us the mind of the Christians within the pale of the Church, lived leaders of heresy whose extant writings, however fragmentary, bear witness to the fact that, without the Church, most of the books of the New Testament were known, quoted, and put on the same level as those of the Old Testament. Such is the case with BASILIDES, with VALENTINUS, and with MARCION.

[1] Cfr. St. JUSTIN, First Apology, chaps. 66, 67; Dialogue with Trypho, chaps. 10, 100, 103. For quotations and discussion, see unabridged "General Introduction" by the present writer, pp. 95–97.

[2] Cfr. Dialogue with Trypho, chap. 81.

[3] Cfr. unabridged "General Introduction," p. 97.

This concordant testimony of orthodox and heretical writers in the second century regarding the authoritative character of most of the books of the New Testament proves conclusively against Rationalists that these sacred books must have enjoyed the same authoritative character a considerable time before both champions and opponents of orthodoxy had appeared.

**3. The Ecclesiastical Writers of the West and of the East.** A most valuable Western testimony to the contents of the New Testament Canon towards the end of the second century is that of a fragmentary list commonly known as the *Muratorian* Canon. This list, discovered in the Ambrosian library at Milan by Muratori (hence its name) in 1740, gives us the mind of the *Roman* Church at that early date. It bears testimony to the official reception of all the writings of the New Testament save to that of the Epistle to the Hebrews and of the Epistle of St. James, which are left unmentioned, save also to that of the second Epistle of St. Peter, which is probably spoken of as "not universally received." [1]

These deutero-canonical Epistles are likewise either unknown or rejected, at this time, by the churches of Gaul and North Africa, for there is no trace of them in St. Irenæus († about 200 A.D.) or in TERTULLIAN († 220).

But while Roman and Western writers seem opposed to those New Testament writings, the tradition of the great Church of Alexandria is in favor of their sacred character, as proved by a careful study of the works of CLEMENT, the head of the Alexandrian school from 180 to 202 A.D., of ORIGEN († 254), and of EUSEBIUS of Cæsarea († 340). The opposition to these deutero-canonical books which is referred to in the works of the two writers last named [2] is not a positive

[1] The text of the Muratorian Canon may be found in Cornely, Loisy, Breen, Westcott, etc., opp. cit. For details concerning its testimony, see unabridged edition of "General Introduction," p. 99 sq.

[2] They speak of those writings as 'disputed" (ἀντιλεγόμενα, etc.).

testimony against their sacred character, and our entire Canon of the New Testament is found in the *Sinaiticus*, a Greek codex of the fourth century, and was also probably found originally in the *Vaticanus*, another Greek MS. of the same century.[1]

### § 3. *From the Fourth Century to Our Time.*

**1. The Canon of the New Testament in the Western Churches.** The history of the Canon of the New Testament in the Western churches between the fourth century and the Council of Florence (middle of the fifteenth century) exhibits but few features worthy of notice. The first, and indeed the most important, of these features consists in the influence which Eastern views regarding the Epistle to the Hebrews, the second Epistle of St. Peter, and the Epistle of St. James exercised upon leading Fathers and writers of the West at the beginning of this long period. It is directly owing to that influence that St. HILARY of Poitiers († 367), St. PHILASTRIUS of Brescia († 387), and RUFINUS († 410) were led to admit into their Canon of the New Testament the few deutero-canonical epistles still missing in their collection.

A second feature to be noticed consists in the rapidity with which the newly completed Canon was adopted wherever Latin was spoken. It was very soon received not only in Italy and Africa, but also in Gaul and Spain, and even in Britain and Ireland.

A third and last feature to be mentioned here is the constant firmness with which the Western churches adhered to the full Canon of the New Testament during the Middle Ages. Evidently the New Testament Canon was no longer a problem to be solved, but a firm and universally accepted tradition in the churches of the West.

[1] Cfr. unabridged edition of "General Introduction," pp. 101–105.—The *Sinaiticus* and the *Vaticanus* do not contain the deutero-canonical fragments of Mark (xvi, 9–20) and John (vii, 53–viii, 11).

It is not surprising, therefore, to find Pope EUGENIUS IV. declaring solemnly, with the approval of the Council of Florence (Feb. 4, 1442), that the holy Roman Church admits as equally inspired with the books of the Old Testament all those of the New which are enumerated, without the least distinction between proto- and deutero-canonical writings. Much more surprising indeed is it to find that, speaking as erudite humanists, ERASMUS († 1536) and CAJETAN († 1534) mentioned the old doubts concerning the deutero-canonical books of the New Testament in terms (especially those of Cajetan) which must have seemed at the time, if not an endorsement, at least a too favorable appreciation of the wrong views of the early Reformers, which the Church soon condemned formally in the Council of Trent.

If we set aside all the questions agitated by the Fathers of Trent which either have no direct bearing on the holy writings of the New Testament, or have already been sufficiently mentioned in connection with the History of the Canon of the Old Testament, we shall find that the discussions of the Council referred chiefly to the three following points: (1) the canonicity of several books rejected by heretics, especially by Luther; (2) the canonicity of the deutero-canonical parts controverted even among Catholics; (3) the genuineness of the sacred books, because of its intimate connection with their inspired character. The first of these points was soon agreed upon, for the Fathers had no other aim but to re promulgate and sanction definitively the tradition of past ages in regard to the sacred writings of the New Testament, and this tradition was in their eyes absolutely favorable to the canonical character of all the books which were then contained in the Latin Vulgate. On the second point the Fathers of the Council were much more divided. Apparently they did not care to define questions still controverted among Catholics, and although "they thought that, at some future

time, a special decree concerning the canonicity of the fragments of the Gospels could be framed,"[1] they preferred to follow the example of the Council of Florence, which had made no difference between the proto- and the deutero-canonical parts; a majority of two-thirds decided that in the decree on the reception of the Gospels a distinct mention of these fragments should not be made.[2] The third point, which bore on the genuineness of the sacred books, had a special importance at the time of its discussion, when in the eyes of all—Catholics and Protestants alike—the inspiration of a book ascribed to an Apostlic writer was most intimately bound up with its authenticity. This is why, although the Fathers never intended to define this authenticity of the canonical books, yet they insisted that the names of the authors to whom they were ascribed by tradition should be inserted in the enumeration of writings declared "sacred and canonical" by the Council.[3]

**2. The Canon of the New Testament in the Eastern Churches.** In adopting a Canon which included without the least distinction as regards inspiration and genuineness both the proto- and the deutero-canonical writings of the New Testament, the Fathers of Trent simply conformed to what had been for long centuries the firm tradition not only of the Western but also of the Eastern churches. It is true that during the fourth and fifth centuries of our era these latter

[1] Cfr. THEINER, Acta Genuina Concilii Tridentini, vol. i, p. 71.

[2] Cfr. THEINER, ibid., p. 77. The proposed wording of the decree was apparently: "Si quis autem libros sacros, prout in ecclesia leguntur, pro sacris et canonicis non susceperit . . . A. S."; but, as the Cardinal of Trent remarked, this wording, if applied to the Gospels, would seem to affirm "ut ne totum quidem evangelium recipere videamur, quoniam non omnes evangelii partes in ecclesia leguntur." The formula was therefore altered, and the final wording of the decree reads: "Si quis libros *integros, cum omnibus suis partibus*, prout in Ecclesia *catholica* legi consueverunt *et in illa veteri Latina Vulgata editione habentur*. . . ." (THEINER, p. 84.)

[3] The theological bearing of this insertion is closely examined by LOISY, Canon du Nouveau Testament, p. 250 sqq.

churches betray some lack of unity concerning the Canon, as may be seen from the fact that while the Alexandrian writers St. Athanasius (Festal Epistle of 367 A.D.) and St. Cyril of Alexandria († 444) use the full Canon, the Fathers of Palestine and Asia Minor—such as St. Cyril of Jerusalem († 386), St. Gregory Nazianzen († 389), St. Amphilochius († about 380), etc.—seem to reject the Apocalypse, and those of Antioch—such as St. John Chrysostom († 407), Theodoret († 457?), Aphraates (wrote about 340), etc.—are opposed not only to the same book, but also to the deutero-canonical Epistles not found in the Peshitto. But even admitting that this opposition went as far as a positive exclusion of one or several of these books, it remains none the less true that after a short lapse of time it had well-nigh altogether disappeared. Indeed, if we except Cosmas Indicopleustes (535 A.D.), who excludes from his catalogue the *Apocalypse* and the *seven* Catholic Epistles, it may be said that, from the middle of the fifth century, all the writers of Alexandria, Palestine and Asia Minor, Syria and Byzantium accept our full Canon without misgiving.[1]

In view of these facts it is only natural to find that the Council *in Trullo* (692 A.D.), which enjoys so much authority in the East, approved solemnly of the complete Canon of St. Athanasius and the Latin Council of Carthage. In fact, only a few traces of the old doubts lingered in the writings of Nicephorus († 828) and of some Greek canonists of the twelfth century; and there is no doubt that, ever since, the churches of the East have agreed with those of the West in admitting a Canon at once complete and pure.

**3. The Canon of the New Testament in the Protestant Sects.** It would be a waste of time to dwell here on the tests imagined by Luther († 1546) and Calvin († 1564) to

[1] The Nestorians still cling to the incomplete Canon of the school of Antioch.

find out an essential difference between the books so long regarded as canonical by the East and the West. Their great principle, which was also that of the other early reformers, that independently of Church and tradition a book proves itself to the regenerated man as truly containing the Word of God and worthy to be numbered among the canonical Scriptures, was not applicable in practice and soon ceased to be—if it ever was—the real rule whereby Protestants determined the books which should make up the Canon of the New Testament.[1]

According to Luther, the head of the *Saxon* school, only four writings should be excluded from the Canon of the New Testament, viz., (1) the Epistle to the Hebrews, which he regarded as "neither Paul's nor an Apostle's"; (2) the Apocalypse, which he spoke of "tossing into the Elbe," as "neither apostolic nor prophetic"; (3) the Epistle of James, which he pronounced unapostolic and "a right strawy epistle"; (4) finally, the Epistle of Jude, which he declared spurious and useless.[2] Variations as to the number of the books to be rejected soon appeared in the Lutheran school, and "in the course of time its members grew more and more familiar with the idea that the difference between the two classes of apostolic writings consisted at bottom only in the degree of certainty regarding their respective origin. . . . It was preferred, therefore, to choose for classifying them terms that were quite inoffensive; e.g., *canonical books of the first and second series*, or *of the first and second Canon*." [3]

A very different reason, however, may have contributed powerfully to make the Lutherans careful not to insist too much on the supposed inferiority of the deutero-canonical

[1] Cfr. chap. iii, § 3, n. 1. See also Reuss, History of the Sacred Scriptures of the New Testament, vol. ii, § 339 (Engl. Transl.).

[2] The motives put forth by Luther may be found in Westcott, Canon of the New Testament, p. 449 sq.; Loisy, Canon du Nouveau Testament, p. 230 sq.

[3] Reuss, loc. cit., p. 369.

books of the New Testament. They could not help noticing during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that the other schools of reformers (the *Swiss* school under Zwingli, Œcolampadius, and even Calvin,[1] the *Armenian* school under the leadership of Grotius (de Groot), and the *English* Church with its first divines) never took any decisive stand against the seven Antilegomena. All these schools settled their Canon of the New Testament more by usage than by deep historical research or by any dogmatic theory, and therefore they continued to value the full Canon of their ancestors. Nay, more: the *Bohemian* Confession of Faith, and to some extent the XXXIX Articles of the *Anglican* Church, appeal still to "patristic tradition" as a ground for their position regarding the Sacred Scriptures. Hence no school of reformers, the Lutheran not any more than the others, dared to incriminate the old Church for upholding a Canon of the New Testament which so many Protestant sects still preserved intact.

However this may be, it is certain that at no time since the beginning of the Reformation was the New Testament mutilated by the suppression of the deutero-canonical writings. All along, these inspired books have had a place in the Bibles of all the Protestant sects, and it is only in the German editions of the sacred text that a trace may be found of a difference between the four books (Hebrews, James, Jude, Apocalypse) rejected by Luther and the other books of the New Testament: these four writings occupy the last position in the printed editions, as if to suggest their inferior character.

The complete Canon thus ratified during the first centuries of the Reformation has been maintained without the least alteration in practice in the more or less *Orthodox* schools of the nineteenth century, and whatever the views of their individual scholars regarding the genuineness or even the divine char-

[1] The only deutero-canonical books probably excluded by Calvin from the New Testament Canon are the 2d and 3d Epistles of St. John.

acter of this or that particular book, the recasting of the Canon of the New Testament is not even dreamed of among them. These schools of Protestant thought prefer to look upon the question as substantially well settled in the past, and to leave it in *statu quo*, rather than to tackle what they consider a very difficult problem and a probable source of further divisions in the Protestant churches.[1]

Side by side with these more or less conservative schools of Protestant theology there are *Rationalistic* schools whose principles may be traced back chiefly to the work of the German critic SEMLER († 1791), entitled "Essay on a Free Examination of the Canon." His general views, as well as those of his followers, have been already summarized in connection with the History of the Canon of the Old Testament, and hence there remains here only to add a few words about the famous Tübingen school and the reaction which has set in against its principles and conclusions.

The founder and central figure of the modern Tübingen school was Ferdinand Christian BAUR († 1860), who maintained that the peculiar doctrinal contents of each writing give the key to its origin. According to him, the Christian religion emerged slowly from the strife and gradual reconciliation of two opposite parties, the one Jewish, claiming Peter as its head, the other Gentile, having Paul for its chief leader; the one contending that the Jewish law and customs should be imposed upon Gentile converts, the other affirming that all such believers should not be bound to the Mosaic rite of circumcision and to all that it implied. "The history of Christianity from the Apostolic Age to the middle of the second century was the history of this controversy in its various stages of (1) unmitigated antagonism between the two opposite tendencies; (2) incipient and progressive reconciliation; (3) consummated reconciliation and completed union and

[1] Cfr. James HASTINGS, Bible Dict., art. Bible, p. 291 sq.

unity. The books of the New Testament all relate to one or other of these stages, and their dates may be approximately fixed by the tendencies they respectively represent. A book which belongs to the first stage, and advocates either pure Paulinism or a purely Judaistic view of Christianity, is therefore early and apostolic; on the other hand, a book which belongs to the final stage and presents a view of Christianity rising entirely above antagonisms must be of late date, and cannot have had an Apostle for its author." [1]

Applying this test to the contents of the books of the New Testament, Baur finds that only five writings have a right to be considered as undoubtedly genuine. These are: Romans, First and Second Corinthians, Galatians, which strenuously advocate pure Paulinism, and the Apocalypse, which, on the contrary, takes a purely Judaistic view of Christianity. Many of the other books are at best doubtful, and some of them belong unquestionably to the second century.

Such is in substance the theory of Baur and his many followers, Zeller, Schwegler, Köstlin, Ritschl, Bruno Bauer, etc. It practically amounted to a denial of the Canon, since "it allowed the greater number of its constituent parts to be lost in the stream of the history of doctrine along with other works of a very different character." [2] Perhaps for this very reason many of its results, together with many of its premises, gradually became widely spread among the modern critical schools.

Of late, however, Prof. Adolf Harnack, in the first part of his *Chronologie* (published in 1897), seems to give up the very fundamental position of Baur and other Rationalistic scholars. He frankly recognizes that "in the criticism of the sources of primitive Christianity we are, without doubt, embarked on a retrograde movement towards tradition," and affirms that "the chronological framework in which tradition

[1] Bruce, Apologetics, Book III, chap vii.
[2] B. Weiss, A Manual of Introd. to the N. T., p. 15 (Engl. Transl.).

has arranged the documents from the Pauline Epistles down to Irenæus is in all main points right, and compels the historian to disregard all hypotheses in reference to the historical sequence of things which deny this framework." Of course these expressions of the German professor should not be taken too literally, for Harnack himself departs freely enough in connection with some canonical books from the beaten track of tradition.[1] But it cannot be denied that, while speaking of Baur with respect, he sets aside Baur's favorite positions, and discredits his method as one that started with certain assumptions regarding the existence and work of certain operative elements in primitive Christianity and the early Church, and made the writings conform to these.

Indeed, the words of censure of the brilliant professor of Berlin reach directly the unscientific method of the founder of the Tübingen school. But there is no doubt that they are also indirectly a condemnation of the no less unscientific methods resorted to by the founders of the Reformation, while they are a vindication of the principle by which the Church of God ever judged of the apostolic and canonical origin of the books of the New Testament.

[1] Cfr. his chronological table of events and literature connected with Christianity in Die Chronologie der Altchristlichen Litteratur bis Eusebius, Erster Band, p. 717 sqq.

## SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTER V.

### The Apocryphal or Uncanonical Books of the Bible.

Name and Importance of these Books.

**I. Apocryphals of the Old Testament.**

- 1. In Latin Editions.
  - The Prayer of Manasses.
  - Third and Fourth Books of Esdras.
- 2. In Greek Editions.
  - Psalm 151st ascribed to David.
  - The Psalter of Solomon.
  - The Third and Fourth Books of the Machabees.
- 3. Apocryphals Quoted by New Testament Writers.
  - Names of these Apocryphal Books.
  - By Whom Quoted?
  - The Book of Enoch.

**II. Apocryphals of the New Testament.**

- 1. Apocryphal Gospels.
  - Extant Gospels refer to the Childhood and Passion of Christ.
  - Gospels no longer extant.
- 2. Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles.
  - Names and General Value.
- 3. Apocryphal Epistles.
  - Correspondence between St. Paul and the Corinthians.
  - The Epistle to the Laodiceans.
  - Correspondence between St. Paul and Seneca.
- 4. Apocryphal Apocalypses.
  - The Revelation of Peter.
  - The Visiones Pauli.

# CHAPTER V.

## THE APOCRYPHAL OR UNCANONICAL BOOKS OF THE BIBLE.[1]

**Name and Importance of these Books.** Besides the books of the Old and New Testament which the Church of God regards as sacred and inspired, there is a whole literature made up of works which are commonly called *Apocryphal*.[2] In the present day, as indeed for several centuries,[3] this name is usually applied to books whose claims to canonicity are not recognized by the Church It is in this sense that Protestants call "Apocryphal" our deutero-canonical books of the Old Testament; [4] but, as we saw in the foregoing chapters, these books have a strict right, even on purely historical grounds, to be considered as canonical.

The importance attached to this *Apocryphal* or *Uncanonical* literature has greatly varied through centuries. By most of the early writers of the Church, because of its containing "things contrary to faith or otherwise objectionable," [5] it was considered as dangerous and worthy only of anathema. Others,[6] however, whilst not approving of its indiscriminate use, thought that real advantages might be derived from a careful perusal of its contents, and this is unquestionably the prevalent view of scholars in our century. In the present day the apocryphal books are studied attentively by the Biblical interpreter, who hopes to find in them facts or expressions which throw light on obscure

[1] For details, references to books, etc., throughout this chapter, see chaps. v and vi in the unabridged edition of "General Introduction."

[2] Ἀπόκρυφος, hidden.

[3] Cfr. TROCHON, Introduction Générale, p. 471; Jas. HASTINGS, Bible Dictionary, art. Apocrypha.

[4] They usually call them the *Apocrypha*, after the manner of St. Jerome and other Latin writers.

[5] Cfr. ORIGEN, in Cant. Cantic. prologus.

[6] ORIGEN, for instance, in Matth. His words are quoted in VIGOUROUX, Dictionnaire de la Bible, art. *Apocryphes*, p. 767.

passages of the canonical writings; by the student of history, who seeks to discover in them the impress of the ideas and anticipations of the period in which they appeared or which they describe; by the apologetic writer, who compares their contents with those of the canonical books, and is thereby enabled to show the incomparable superiority of the latter, etc.

## § 1. *Apocryphal Writings of the Old Testament.*

**1. Apocryphals in Latin Editions.** Besides the *Prologue* to Ecclesiasticus, and the *Preface* to the Lamentations, three apocryphal writings are allowed a place in our authorized editions of the Latin Vulgate. They are the *Prayer of Manasses*, the *Third* and *Fourth Books of Esdras*.

In fifteen verses the Prayer ascribed to Manasses († 644 B.C.) describes the sentiments of repentance whereby the Jewish king obtained forgiveness for his past transgressions. Although a very late production, perhaps composed in Hebrew, it has been preserved at the end of our Latin Bibles.

The second apocryphal writing, now also placed at the end of our Latin editions, is the Third Book of Esdras. Under the name of the First Book of Esdras this work was formerly regarded as canonical by many ecclesiastical writers of the East and of the West. For a time, even, its canonicity was officially recognized in the Western churches. When its contents are closely looked into, they are found to be for the largest part simply a duplicate of canonical passages in the second book of Paralipomenon and in the first and second of Esdras. The book, therefore, seems to be, not an independent writing, but rather a revised translation with a single interpolation taken from some independent source, viz., iii–v, 6; and as such it was finally rejected by the Church, exactly as was done in the case of the old Septuagint translation of the book of Daniel.

The last apocryphal writing found at the end of our authorized Latin editions is the Fourth Book, or Apocalypse, of Esdras. If we leave aside the opening and concluding chapters (i, ii; xv, xvi), which are certainly Christian additions, the book is found to be made up of seven revelations or visions supposed to have been granted in Babylon to Esdras by the angel Uriel. Its author was more probably a Palestinian than an Alexandrian Jew, although all take it for granted that he wrote in Hellen-

istic Greek. It is justly called the Apocalypse of the year 97 A.D., from the date of its composition.

**2. Apocryphals in the Septuagint Editions.** The first apocryphal piece peculiar to the Greek editions of the Old Testament is a short Psalm, counted as the 151st. Its seven verses add nothing to the narrative of David's encounter with Goliath in I Kings, on which it is dependent. It is a very tame composition.

The second apocryphal work found in some editions of the Septuagint is the Psalter of Solomon, or Psalms of the Pharisees. It is made up of eighteen hymns or Psalms, all sharing in the prevalent despondent tone of the collection, all subserving the common purpose of securing public compliance with the Law and preparation for the coming of the Messias. The book bears the distinct impress of one or several Pharisaic writers, and its probable date of composition is between 70 and 40 B.C.

The last two books found in the Greek editions of the Old Testament are prose compositions which, from the connection of their contents with incidents recorded in our second book of Machabees, have been called the *third* and *fourth* books of the Machabees. The former deals with an episode of Jewish history which is described as having taken place under the Egyptian King Ptolemy IV., Philopator (B.C. 222–204), and consequently before the Machabean period. It is most likely another form of the story of Heliodorus which is recorded in the second book of the Machabees (chap. v) and which became connected with Egypt and Alexandria under the pen of some Jewish Egyptian writer. Several things in its opening chapters prove that the original beginning of the book is no longer extant. The work was composed probably in the first century before the Christian era.

The *fourth* book of the Machabees is more distinctly connected with our second canonical book of that name. Under the form of an address to Jewish hearers or readers, the writer tries to prove that it is not difficult to lead a pious life, if only they follow the precepts of "pious reason," and for this purpose he appeals to facts of Jewish history, especially to the martyrdom of Eleazar and the seven Machabean brothers which are detailed in the second canonical book of the Machabees (chaps. vi, vii). The author is unknown. He probably wrote shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem (70 A.D.).

**3. Apocryphals Quoted by New Testament Writers.** Among the apocryphal books of the Old Testament it is usual to reckon works which ecclesiastical writers tell us are quoted as authorities in the inspired books of the New Testament. These works are: (1) a certain "Apocryphal of Jeremias" which Origen and St. Jerome think was quoted by St. Matthew (xxvii, 9); (2) "the Apocalypse of Elias," which, according to the same ecclesiastical writers, is cited in I Cor. ii, 9, and again, according to St. Epiphanius, in Ephes. v, 14; (3) "the Assumption of Moses," which Origen, Didymus of Alexandria († ab. 395), etc., regard as quoted in the short Epistle of St. Jude (verse 9); finally (4) "the book of Enoch," which Tertullian, St. Augustine, and St. Jerome consider as quoted in the same Catholic Epistle (Jude, verses 14–15).

Here we shall speak only of the last-named book, "the book of Enoch," because of the high value set upon it during the early ages of Christianity, and because of its revived importance in modern times.

When we bear in mind that the early writers of the Church took literally the words of St. Jude, "Enoch also the seventh from Adam, prophesied, saying,"[1] which introduce a passage from the book of Enoch,[2] we can easily understand how they did not hesitate to treat as Holy Writ a book which in their eyes had the solemn Approval of an Apostle. In point of fact, the author of the Epistle of Barnabas (after 70 A.D.) cites Enoch twice as Scripture, and St. Athenagoras (about 170 A.D.) regards its author as a true prophet. A little later, Tertullian emphatically defends the divine character of the book of Enoch, whilst Origen, though not regarding it strictly as inspired, does not dare to reject it altogether. Other writers, like St. Justin, St. Irenæus, etc., though not explicitly in favor of its divine character, are perfectly acquainted with its contents, or quote it as an authority. In the fourth century, however, St. Hilary of Poitiers, St. Jerome, and St. Augustine agree with the Apostolic Constitutions in speaking of the book of Enoch as an "apocryphal," "full of fables"; and under the ban of such authorities the book soon passed out of use and knowledge till 1773, when

[1] The *formula citandi* in Jude (verses 14, 15) is identical with the formula which introduces a passage from Isaias in St. Matt. (xv, 7) and St. Mark (vii, 6).

[2] Enoch, chap. i, 9; cfr. chap. lx, 8, where Enoch is called "the seventh from Adam," exactly as St. Jude calls him.

the English traveller Bruce brought from Abyssinia two MSS. of an Ethiopic translation, from one of which Laurence made the first modern translation of Enoch in 1821.

The book of Enoch belongs to that apocalyptic literature which, under the form of revelations and visions, aimed at solving the difficulties connected with the righteousness of God and the suffering condition of His faithful servants—whether collectively or individually—here below. In its present form it is a compilation whose first origin may be traced back to the sense which the Jews had gradually evolved from the passage of Genesis (v, 24), where it is said that "Enoch walked with God."

It is impossible to peruse the work without being struck by the number of expressions and ideas—regarding the last judgment and general resurrection, heaven and hell, the person of the Messias, His origin, titles, character, mission, and power, etc.—which are common to the book of Enoch and to the various writings of the New Testament. It is plain that the two collections of books known as the book of Enoch and the New Testament are not absolutely independent of each other; and since it cannot be doubted that the former existed before the latter was composed (Enoch was compiled between 200 and 65 B.C.), the great influence of the book of Enoch upon the writings of the New Testament must be admitted.

## § 2. *Apocryphal Writings of the New Testament.*

**1. Apocryphal Gospels.** It was but a short time after our canonical Gospels had begun to be widely circulated in the early churches, and had been fully approved for public use in Christian services, when pious believers in Christ, struck with the incompleteness of these authentic *Memoirs*, earnestly desired whatever additional information might be secured. Moreover, at that time there were still disconnected stories and more or less local traditions put forth under the names of such Apostles as James, Thomas, etc., or intimately connected with the facts or personages barely mentioned in the canonical Gospels, so that it was only natural that some, at least, of the current stories or traditions should be written down and freely circulated with such titles as the Gospels of James, of Thomas, of the Infancy, etc. To these were soon added pure fictions, which were given also sacred names as a passport; and in this

way a large apocryphal literature having some manner of connection with our Gospels was formed within the Church itself: it has received the general name of the *Apocryphal Gospels*.

Among the extant Apocryphal Gospels many refer to the childhood of Jesus. This is the case with the so-called *Protevangelium Jacobi*, which, in its present form, was not composed before the second century of our era. It relates the angelic message to Anna and Joachim, announcing that they should have a child; the birth of Mary and her presentation in the Temple when three years of age, and her marriage to Joseph at the age of twelve. Then come the Annunciation, the journey to Bethlehem consequent on the enrolment prescribed by Augustus, and the birth of Jesus in a cave at Bethlehem, soon followed by the visit of the Magi. The book concludes with a narrative of the massacre of the Holy Innocents, and with the subscription of James.

This is the case also with the *Gospel of Thomas*, likewise of the second century of our era. The book is supposed to describe the infancy of Jesus; in reality it is made up of fictitious stories in which the puerile, extravagant, and even cruel character of the miracles ascribed to the divine Child are in striking contrast with that of the miracles recorded in our canonical Gospels.

A third apocryphal Gospel referring to the childhood of Jesus is known under the name of the *Arabic Gospel of the Infancy*. It bears some resemblance in its first and last chapters to the Protevangelium Jacobi and the Gospel of Thomas, while in its central part it is most likely a collection of Egyptian tales invented and compiled with the intention of glorifying Our Lord's mother as the chief minister of His divine power and favor.

The last Gospel referring to the childhood of Jesus which we shall mention here is called the *History of Joseph the Carpenter*. Like the preceding, it has come down to us only through the Arabic, and goes back to about the fifth century after Christ. The writer, whose object is clearly to exalt Joseph in the eyes of his readers, introduces Jesus as telling to His disciples the history of His foster-father. Joseph is herein described as a priest, married, and having six children. After the death of his wife he is espoused to Mary, who soon conceives and gives birth to Jesus in Bethlehem. The flight into Egypt and return to Nazareth are next mentioned, and the rest of the book is taken up with a long account of the last days of Joseph, of his

terrors at the approach of death, and finally of his decease and burial "after he had completed one hundred and eleven years."

Only two really distinct Gospels referring to the Passion of Our Lord have come down to us: these are the *Acta Pilati*, or "Acts of Our Lord Jesus Christ wrought in the time of Pontius Pilate," and the *Descensus Christi ad Inferos*. Since the sixteenth century they are usually published under the common name of the *Gospel of Nicodemus*, but beyond the fact that their narrative bears on the last scenes mentioned in our canonical records they have but little in common, for they are works of different dates, contents, and authorship.

Of the apocryphal Gospels no longer extant a long list could be given, but clearly to little or no profit. Issuing from heretical pens, and written for the purpose of spreading or supporting heterodox doctrines, these productions were naturally looked upon with suspicion by Catholic writers at their first appearance, and soon afterwards put under the public ban of the Church, so that, being practically confined within the narrow limits of a sect, they gradually ceased to be circulated, and ultimately disappeared. Two of these writings, however, deserve here a special notice, viz., the *Gospel of Peter* and the *Gospel According to the Hebrews*.

The first of these Gospels, a short fragment of which was dug up in 1886 in an ancient cemetery at Akhmim (Upper Egypt), was well known to Eusebius of Cæsarea, who classed it among the heretical books which must be absolutely rejected, and to Serapion, Bishop of Antioch from 190 to 210 A.D., who forbade its public use in churches. It is the work of the Docetæ of the second century, and it was most likely composed in Syria, where we first hear of it.

Of much greater importance in the history of the New Testament writings is the second Gospel above mentioned, for, speaking of it under the name of the *Gospel of the Nazarenes*, St. Jerome considers it as the Hebrew original of our Greek canonical Gospel according to St. Matthew. Again, many ecclesiastical writers, among whom St. Justin († 163), were acquainted with it, and during the third and fourth centuries Hebrew-speaking sectaries used it as the genuine work of our first Evangelist. It is, therefore, a very ancient production, but, as far as can be judged from the fragments which have come down to us, it has no right to originality as compared with our canonical Gospel.

This is the almost unanimous verdict of Rationalistic as well as of conservative scholars, and it is not improbable that, in holding a different view, St. Jerome yielded somewhat to his well-known bias for whatever smacked of the *Hebraica Veritas*.

**2. Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles.** As might naturally be expected, apocryphal writings connected with the other books of the New Testament, besides the Gospels, appeared during the early ages of Christianity. Most of these productions, under the different names of Acts (*Πράξεις*), Circuits (*Περίοδοι*), Miracles (*Θαυμάτα*), Martyrdom (*Μαρτύριον*, *Τελείωσις*), profess to record the apostolic labors of the first preachers of the Gospel, and are on that account usually designated under the general name of the *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*. The principal among them are, in the second century, the Acts of Paul and Thecla, the Acts of St. John, those of St. Peter and St. Paul and of St. Andrew; and, in the third century, the Acts ascribed to St. Thomas, the Teaching of Addai (Thaddæus), and the Clementine Recognitions.

If we except the last of these apocryphal writings, they all seem to have taken their origin in heretical circles, and, despite their alterations and recastings by orthodox hands, bear still traces of the tenets of the sects for the use of which they were originally composed. In the early Christian ages Ebionites, Gnostics, Encratites, etc., were busily engaged writing tales of wonders wrought by the Apostles, which would have a lively interest for heretics and orthodox alike, and by means of which doctrinal errors would be easily propagated. Of course, no faithful Catholic individual or community ever dreamt of setting any other record of apostolic labors and sufferings on the same level as the inspired Acts of the Apostles by St. Luke, so that this branch of Christian literature was less closely watched over by ecclesiastical authority than would certainly have been the case if attempts at *canonizing* it had been made in the Church. As a consequence these apocryphal books fell easily into the hands of Catholics, and were circulated freely among them under the form of expurgated copies which, whilst containing the events whose substance was supposed to be faithfully recorded, had been rendered inoffensive to orthodox readers by the correction or removal of whatever was deemed objectionable. It is clear, therefore, that, besides the fact that these apocryphal

writings presuppose the existence of our canonical book of the Acts, and prove its incomparable superiority by way of contrast, all such compositions add very little, if anything, to our knowledge of the manner in which our New Testament writings were composed and finally gathered up into one authoritative collection. It cannot be denied, however, that a careful study of their contents may at times light up the path of the Catholic interpreter.

**3. Apocryphal Epistles.** Leaving aside the apocryphal accounts of a correspondence which never did exist between Abgar and Jesus,[1] we shall first mention briefly the correspondence which has really existed between St. Paul and the Corinthians,[2] but of which only unauthentic remains have come down to us. Besides our two canonical Epistles to the Corinthians, there are two others extant in some Armenian MSS., one claiming to be from the faithful of Corinth to St. Paul, the other from St. Paul to the Corinthians. These letters were unknown to the early writers of the Church and are made up mostly of thoughts and expressions borrowed from the genuine Epistles of St. Paul. They were suggested by the words of our first Epistle to the Corinthians, "Now concerning the things of which you wrote" (chap. vii, 1), and "In that letter I wrote to you not to be associated with fornicators" (chap. v, 9); and in the present day their genuineness is denied by all.

Another apocryphal Epistle ascribed to St. Paul, that "to the Laodiceans," owes also its origin to a passage from a genuine Epistle of the great Apostle (Coloss. iv, 16). It was originally written in Greek, but is extant only in a Latin translation, found in several MSS. of the Latin Vulgate. It was apparently known to the author of the Muratorian Canon. But, however ancient its composition, the Epistle is certainly spurious. Almost all its nineteen verses are made up of words borrowed from the Epistles to the Colossians, Ephesians, and Philippians.

As regards the apocryphal correspondence between St. Paul and Seneca, suffice it to say that the fourteen epistles supposed to have passed between them were probably forged during the

[1] An English translation of these letters, from Abgar to Jesus and from Jesus to Abgar, is given in the *Apocryphal Gospels* published by B. H. Cowper, pp. 219, 220.

[2] Cfr. I Cor. vii, 1; v, 9.

fourth century of our era, either to recommend Seneca to Christian readers, or to recommend Christianity to students of Seneca.

**4. Apocryphal Apocalypses.** As there are apocryphal Gospels, Acts, and Epistles, so are there also apocryphal Apocalypses, one of which, the *Revelation of Peter*, was little more than a name till 1886, when nearly half of its text was discovered in Egypt, together with the fragment of the Gospel of Peter already referred to. Few, if any, apocryphal writings have been retained longer in use for public services than this Apocalypse, or Revelation, of Peter. This is indeed a clear proof of its popularity, but none whatever of its canonicity.

As far as can be gathered from the study of all the extant fragments of the Revelation of Peter, it seems that its close literary resemblance with our second Epistle of St. Peter shows that its composition was suggested by such passages of this canonical Epistle as refer to the day of the Lord and to the torments which await the wicked.

It is also a passage of one of our New Testament writings, where St. Paul declares that he has been favored with "visions and revelations of the Lord" (II Cor. xii, 1 sqq.), which led a compiler to write the *Apocalypse of Paul*, or *Visiones Pauli*. The perfect orthodoxy of the author cannot be questioned, but such is not the case with his originality, despite his pretension to record mysteries revealed to no one but to the Apostle of the Gentiles. Besides our writings of the New Testament, which he naturally utilizes, he borrows freely from more ancient apocalypses, among which we must reckon in a special manner the Revelation of Peter. Indeed, originality would have been a hard task at the late date at which he wrote, viz., during the last years of the fourth century; and further, it is not improbable that the Apocalypse of Paul was intended from the first to be what it soon became afterwards, a work of edification for persons leading a religious life, so that it mattered little whether or not it was devoid of originality.

# PART SECOND.

## BIBLICAL TEXTUAL CRITICISM.

## SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTER VI.

### Nature and Divisions of Biblical Criticism.

**I. Its Nature.**

1. Notion of Biblical criticism.
2. Its constructive and destructive aspects.

**II. Higher Criticism.**

1. Real meaning of the term.
2. Problems connected with (Integrity, Authenticity, Literary Form, Reliability,) of the Sacred Writings.
3. Method and general results.

**III. Textual Criticism.**

1. Its starting-point: the various readings of the Sacred Text.
2. Materials Available. (Manuscripts, Translations, Quotations.)
3. Principal rules to determine the relative value of the various readings.
4. Division: History. (Of the Text. Of the principal Versions.)

# PART SECOND.

## BIBLICAL TEXTUAL CRITICISM.

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### CHAPTER VI.

#### NATURE AND DIVISIONS OF BIBLICAL CRITICISM.

##### § 1. *Nature of Biblical Criticism.*

**1. Notion of Biblical Criticism.** The history of the Canon which we have thus far traced proves simply, though conclusively, that the Catholic Bible contains none but books which, on strictly scientific grounds, have a right to belong to the collection of the inspired writings of the Old and of the New Testament. It does not enable us to determine either the time and manner of their composition, or the accuracy with which they have been transmitted in the course of ages. These are further questions which form the special subject-matter of another branch of Introduction to the study of Holy Writ, termed *Biblical Criticism.*

It is indeed true that the *divine* element peculiar to the sacred books does not fall within the range of criticism, but it is not so with the *human* element which they have in common with other literary productions. Though inspired and divine, they bear the unmistakable impress of the time, place, literary methods, etc., of their respective authors, and to all these

literary features the Biblical scholar may reverently yet scientifically apply the present canons of criticism to ascertain and determine the true origin and character of ancient writings. Again, though watched over in a special manner by divine Providence throughout the ages, the inspired books of the Canon have been transcribed during many centuries by all manner of copyists, whose ignorance and carelessness they still bear witness to, and it is only proper that we should have recourse to the art of criticism in order to eliminate the textual errors which can still be discovered, and restore the sacred text as far as possible to its genuine form.

**2. Constructive and Destructive Aspects of Biblical Criticism.** The foregoing remarks show plainly that the ultimate aim of Biblical Criticism is no other than to secure results of a positive character, viz., to ascertain the real author of a book or of a part of a book, to point out its special literary form, to vindicate its reliability, to determine accurately the primitive reading of a passage, etc. Like any other branch of human science, this part of Biblical Introduction gathers up data, ascertains facts, builds up theories, imparts accurate information concerning the questions it inquires into, and in many other ways contributes positively to the increase of man's knowledge. We must grant, however, that side by side with, and indeed because of, its *constructive* aim and method, Biblical Criticism has also a *destructive* aspect. To reach scientific truth it has, in connection with several points, to put aside time-honored theories which do not agree with recently-ascertained facts. Again, through lack of documents, or because of insufficient examination of those newly discovered, or for other reasons, it has often to be satisfied with stating only negative conclusions. At other times, all that it can offer as a substitute for the positive but erroneous

explanations which were readily accepted as true in the past consists in conjectural or more or less probable solutions of difficult but very important problems, and in this manner, also, Biblical Criticism seems to do destructive rather than constructive work. Yet even this destructive work of Biblical Criticism is not carried on for its own sake, but rather with a view to clear the ground, lay down deeper and more solid foundations for a new and more substantial structure, or simply to remodel and strengthen parts of the old edifice of scriptural science. In short, the destructive process of Biblical Criticism is subordinate and subservient to its subsequent and constructive purposes.

## § 2. *The Higher Criticism.*

**1. Real Meaning of the Term.** The destructive work of Biblical Criticism has been carried on mostly in that department of it which is usually designated *Higher Criticism*. It is apparently also in this department that less constructive work has been achieved, or at least has become known to the public at large. Again, Rationalistic scholars have been foremost in claiming its verdict in favor of their irreligious notions and of their negative conclusions. It is not surprising, therefore, that in the eyes of many the term Higher Criticism is nothing but a high-sounding phrase under which lurk the aim and principles of unbelief. In reality the term is not an arrogant and self-laudatory title. It simply suggests that the topics dealt with in this department of Biblical Criticism are of greater importance than those which are examined in another department of this branch of study, known as *Textual* or *Lower Criticism*. While the latter, in its efforts to restore the sacred text to its genuine form, examines and rejects erroneous readings and points out the primitive reading of individual passages, the former rises higher when it endeavors by the careful study of whole books or parts of books to determine their genuineness and other literary characteristics.

**2. Problems of the Higher Criticism.** Although the name of this higher branch of criticism is of comparatively recent origin,

the problems it agitates are of old standing. These are the great questions of integrity, authenticity, literary form, and reliability which *Literary* Criticism has dealt with for centuries, in reference to ordinary ancient writings, but which Christian scholars, owing chiefly to their deep reverence for the written Word of God, felt not at liberty to examine in connection with the sacred books of the Old and the New Testament. In the light of their faith it was sufficient that a book of the Bible should apparently claim to have been written by Moses or Solomon, etc., to admit at once this authorship and to take as granted that the authorship extended to all the integrant parts of the book in question. On account of the same implicit belief in the Word of God, it never occurred to their minds that the reliability of the sacred records could be questioned, and consequently either they did not notice the variations in detail which are found in the Gospels, for instance, or, if they noticed them, they were not at a loss to point out many different ways in which the several accounts could be harmonized. As long as they knew by the infallible teaching of the Church that all the books of the Bible were inspired, it imported little in their eyes to determine what was the special literary form of any one of them. Finally, they took it as a matter of course that a book should be considered as pure history whenever it wore the appearance of a historical record, as strict prophecy if it apparently referred to future events, etc.

Only in the nineteenth century have Christian apologists fully realized the importance of dealing with the delicate problems involved in a critical study of the integrity, authenticity, literary form, and reliability of the sacred writings, and have seen their way to harmonize with their firm belief in the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures a manner of study hitherto applied only to merely human compositions.

**3. Method and Principal Results of the Higher Criticism.** In the treatment of these important and difficult problems Higher Criticism uses principally, but not exclusively, internal evidence. It starts from the unquestionable principle that every literary production bears upon it the traces of the time and place of its composition, and reflects the peculiar frame of mind, style, and literary methods of its author. Whence it proceeds to a minute analysis of the book or part of book under consideration, to

gather up its peculiarities of style, the leading views and feelings of its author, its references to past or present events, its geographical and chronological details, its religious, moral, or political conceptions, its grammatical forms or lexical peculiarities, any traces of compilation, such as titles of pre-existing collections, duplicate accounts of the same event, etc., etc., in a word, all the data which will furnish a solid and extensive basis for comparison between the work under consideration and any other production studied in a like manner and ascribed to the same author or to the same period. Next comes the all-important work of comparison, which at times can be pursued without much technical knowledge, as, for instance, in the case of the book of Psalms, or of the book of Proverbs, but which at other times is so delicate as to require all the knowledge and skill of the expert.

Of course, in following this line of internal evidence, the higher critic is welcome to utilize whatever data or guidance he may derive from the labors of those who have gone before him. In fact, the unprejudiced scholar is only too glad to avail himself of the information given by external evidence whenever he can satisfy himself that the testimony as to the authorship of a book or part of a book goes back near enough to the time of its composition. Again, he does not simply take into account the positive testimony of tradition, but even goes so far as to examine carefully the silence of authors either contemporary or little posterior to the writer whose name is inscribed at the head of a sacred book. In these and in many other ways he makes the most of all the data supplied by external evidence, and there is no doubt that when independent inquiries into the contents of a work have led him to conclusions concordant with those of tradition, oral or written, he has a perfect right to point to the latter as a powerful argument in favor of the validity of his method and of the accuracy of his inferences.

Through the constant and painstaking application of its theoretical principles and practical rules to the examination of the inspired writings, Higher Criticism has reached conclusions whose scientific value has been tested over and over again by scholars of different countries and of every shade of thought and belief, and in consequence the critical views which underwent successfully this ordeal are generally considered as settled. To this first general result obtained by the Higher Criticism

may be added another of much greater importance. In our day, even the most declared enemies of Revelation feel bound to treat of the sacred records with that scientific care which alone can secure them a hearing. Again, in presence of this fair and scientific spirit of investigation conservative scholars understood that, on the one hand, they could not refuse decently to meet their opponents on their own grounds, and that, on the other hand, the old arguments drawn almost exclusively from external evidence could be of only little use against positions which claimed to be based on a minute and thorough discussion of the data supplied by the sacred books themselves. Thus were they led to pay more attention to internal evidence and to take it into fuller account in its bearing on their own traditional views, as also to meet the real issues of the day on grounds accepted by all, and in a manner which proves conclusively that the books of the Bible need not to be dealt with in an exceptional way to vindicate their genuineness or their reliability. Finally, a last general result to be mentioned here of the application of the rules of *Literary* Criticism to our inspired writings consists in the fact that the historical circumstances of their origin and the literary methods followed in their composition are now realized with a distinctness and an accuracy unknown to past ages, and really of the greatest use in their right interpretation.

### § 3. *Biblical Textual Criticism.*

**1. Its Starting-point.** Instead of beginning with the contents of the sacred books with a view to ascertain the method of their composition, which is the starting-point and special purpose of the Higher Criticism, the second and lower branch of Biblical Criticism starts with the various readings which exist in the old manuscripts of the inspired writings as in those of all ancient works, and aims at restoring the sacred text to its genuine form. This department of Biblical Criticism is therefore justly called *Textual* Criticism, inasmuch as it deals all the time with the words whose collection and combination constitute the *text* of Holy Writ. Its work does not indeed rise as high as that which is carried on by the *Higher* Criticism, and on that account this branch is some-

times designated under the name of *Lower* Criticism; yet, in so far as it aims at supplying the interpreter with the original words of the Bible, and unquestionably succeeds in doing so in a large number of cases, it has a considerable importance in the study of the inspired books. In point of fact, *Textual* Criticism forms nowadays the subject-matter of an entire part of the General Introduction to the Sacred Scriptures.

**2. Materials Available for Textual Criticism.** As Textual Criticism aims at deciding which of the various readings of a passage is the primitive one, it has to consult the sources which contain those textual variations, to weigh their relative authority, to eliminate readings which have less to recommend them, and finally to adopt those which are deemed original. It is plain, therefore, that Textual Criticism must appeal principally to external evidence, drawing its materials not so much from the contents of a book of Holy Writ as from copies of it or from other documents which may testify either for or against a particular reading.

There are three external sources from which Textual Criticism derives aid in ascertaining the changes which have been made in the original text of the Bible. The first consists in the *Manuscripts*, or ancient copies of the sacred text. The second source of information comprises the Ancient *Versions* or translations of the Holy Scriptures, whose testimony is at times of much greater value than even that of the extant manuscripts. The third external source from which materials may be drawn includes the *Quotations* of Holy Writ wherever found, whether in the other books of the Bible, or in the writings of the Fathers, or in the paraphrases or commentaries of interpreters.

But besides this external or *documentary* (as it is also called) evidence, Textual Criticism uses *internal* evidence as a subsidiary means to reach the primitive reading of the sacred text.

**3. Principal Rules to Determine the Relative Value of the Various Readings.** When the various readings regarding a passage of the Old or of the New Testament have been gathered, there remains for the Biblical critic to determine, by the unbiassed and skilful application of the usual canons of Textual Criticism, which is the primitive reading. The principal of these canons which are applicable to the criticism of the text of both Testaments [1] may be briefly stated as follows:

(1) Every element of evidence must be allowed its full weight of authority: this is a self-evident principle; yet it has sometimes been lost sight of by eminent critics;

(2) Great weight must be given to the testimony of independent witnesses; their agreement in favor of a reading plainly outweighs the concordant testimony given by witnesses of one and the same class, or coming from one locality, although these may be numerically superior;

(3) "The ancient reading is *generally* the reading of the more ancient manuscripts," [2] and *cæteris paribus* is generally preferable;

(4) *Proclivi lectioni præstat ardua:* the more difficult reading is more likely to be correct, owing to the tendency of transcribers to alter the text from something which they do not understand into something which they do;

(5) *Brevior lectio præferenda verbosiori:* this rule rests on the well-known tendency of copyists to insert in the text marginal notes, glosses, etc., rather than to omit words already contained in the manuscript before them;

(6) The reading which lies at the root of all the variations and best accounts for them is to be preferred: it has clearly the best chance to be the original reading; at any rate, it is anterior to the others.[3]

**4. Division of Textual Criticism.** The questions of Textual Criticism which are usually examined in treatises on General Introduction to the Study of the Bible may conve-

[1] The special principles of criticism for the Old Testament are given by S. DAVIDSON, A Treatise on Biblical Criticism, vol. i, p. 386 sq. (Boston, 1853).

[2] HAMMOND, Textual Criticism of the New Testament, p. 97.

[3] The special canons of criticism for the New Testament will be found in SCRIVENER, A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament, 4th edit., 1894, vol. ii, p. 244 sqq. Cfr. also WESTCOTT and HORT, The New Testament in the Original Greek, vol. ii, Introduction, p. 19 sqq.

niently be divided into those which bear directly on the Original Text and those which refer to its ancient translations. As these two sets of questions will be treated in the following pages on the same historical lines as those on which we pursued our study of the Canon of Holy Writ, this second part of our work will contain two great divisions, called respectively *The History of the Text* and *The History of the Principal Versions of the Old and of the New Testament.*

## SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTER VII.

### History of the Original Text of the Old Testament.

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**I. Description of the Original Text.**

1. Language of the Original Text.
   - Most of the Books written in Hebrew.
   - A Few Books composed in Greek.
2. The Hebrew Language.
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# FIRST DIVISION.

## THE HISTORY OF THE TEXT OF THE BIBLE.

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## CHAPTER VII.

### HISTORY OF THE TEXT OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

§ 1. *Description of the Original Text of the Old Testament.*

**1. Language of the Original Text.** Most of the canonical books of the Old Testament were originally written and have come down to us in a language which is called the *Hebrew*, because it was that of the *Hebrews*, or Israelites, in the days of their national independence. This is the case with all the proto-canonical books composed before Our Lord's time, with the exception of Jeremias x, 11; Esdras iv, 8–vi, 18; vii, 12–26; Daniel ii, 4–vii, which are written in Aramaic. The deutero-canonical book of Ecclesiasticus was also primitively composed in Hebrew, as is clearly proved by the Prologue to our Greek translation of Ecclesiasticus. Even most of the other deutero-canonical writings of the Old Testament, viz., Tobias, Judith, Baruch, and the first book of the Machabees, and the deutero-canonical parts of Daniel and Esther, were very likely written in Hebrew, although they are no longer extant in that language.

There are two books of the Old Testament, however, whose primitive language was the Greek, viz., the deutero-

canonical books of Wisdom, and second of the Machabees. On account of the literary kind of Greek in which these are written, which bears a very close resemblance to the Greek of the New Testament, the treatment of their original language does not need to be taken up apart from that of the original language of the New Testament writings. This applies also to the other deutero-canonical books or parts of books which we now possess no longer in the Hebrew, and in consequence we shall speak here only of the Hebrew as the original language of the Old Testament.

**2. The Hebrew Language.** It would be a sheer waste of time, at the present day, to repeat and refute the arguments formerly set forth to prove that the Hebrew language as found in the Old Testament writings is the original language of mankind. All Hebrew scholars know that Biblical Hebrew belongs to a great family of languages in Western Asia, designated under the name of *Semitic*, because spoken originally by all the descendants of Sem (cfr. Gen. x, 21 sqq.). All these languages, which present the same general features—in respect to both vocabulary and grammatical structure—as the Hebrew of the Bible, may be traced back to a common centre, which is most likely the region to the northeast of Arabia, near the Persian Gulf and towards the old mouth of the Tigris and the Euphrates.

As regards the historical developments of literary Hebrew, it must be confessed that we do not possess sufficient data to describe them with anything like detail and accuracy: the documents are few, their date is often not fully ascertained, the vocalic element whence dialects arise usually is not written, the vocabulary and syntax depend to a large extent on the manner of individual writers whatever their century, and further, authors belonging to a period when the language is in decadence or has already ceased to be spoken may copy successfully the style of the golden age. For these and other similar reasons it is now

impossible to do more than give an imperfect sketch of the historical developments of the Hebrew language.

It would seem that during the most remote period of Hebrew literary composition the written differed but little from the spoken language. This is the general conclusion to which point the oldest songs imbedded in our Pentateuch and in the book of Judges, and extracted mostly from an ancient book entitled *The Book of the Wars of Yahweh*.[1] Composed near the events which they celebrate, these poetical pieces are marked by that terseness and vigor of expression, by that vividness, not to say rudeness, of imagery and conception which bespeak the popular language of the time, and which, much more than either vocabulary or syntax, characterize the primitive period of Hebrew literature. In point of fact, the vocabulary and syntax of these popular songs are well-nigh identical with those of writings belonging to a later date. This is also the conclusion suggested by the literary characteristics of the oldest historical parts of the Pentateuch, Judges, and Samuel, wherein may still be found, of course in due proportion, the same concision of expression, the same vigor and simplicity of grammatical structure, together with the same lexical and syntactical features.[2]

Gradually, however, Hebrew literature divests itself of this popular garb: the art of composition is more apparent, and the style, though nervous and simple, is more easy and harmonious.

The distinction between the language of the people and that of literature is especially manifest at the end of the seventh century B.C. In their popular addresses, the prophets Jeremias and Sophonias speak the language of the multitude, that is, a language which had lost much of its ancient concision and vigor, and even Ezechiel, who is more of a writer than a public speaker, employs new words and constructions which betray the influence of the Aramaic upon the idiom of the people. This decay of the popular tongue is all the more noticeable because writers contemporary with Jeremias, and post-exilic writers,

[1] This is the correct pronunciation of the personal name of the God of Israel; we shall henceforth use it instead of the conventional form "Jehovah."

[2] In the foregoing remarks we do not refer to the *legal* portions of the Pentateuch, because the technical language of law is everywhere and at every period naturally archaic in its stereotyped formulas. Nor do we allude to the period of Israel's sojourn in Egypt, because the Hebrew language seems to have been but little influenced by the Egyptians beyond the adoption of a few Egyptian terms.

possess a style which in many ways resembles that of the eighth century. It seems clear, however, that this comparative perfection of authors so late in date is due to efforts to imitate the best style of bygone days, for in point of fact most writings posterior to the Babylonian Captivity betray the great influence exercised upon them by the popular idiom which gradually melts away into the Aramaic.

This transformation of the Hebrew into the Aramaic was slowly, insensibly effected amid the peculiar circumstances brought about by the Babylonian Captivity. Nehemias made vain efforts to bring about a reaction among the Jews against their total adoption of the Aramaic. Hebrew soon ceased to be the popular idiom, and simply survived as a literary language greatly influenced by, sometimes mixed with, the spoken language of the time, as may be seen, for instance, in the books of Daniel and Esdras.[1]

**3. The Hebrew Writing.** As the Hebrew language belongs to the Semitic family, so does its writing belong to the Semitic alphabets. In its oldest form it was unquestionably the common Semitic character evolved from an old Hieratic Egyptian script, and used alike, in ancient times, by the Moabites, Hebrews, Aramæans, and Phœnicians. One of the oldest monuments of this alphabet—usually designated under the name of the Phœnician alphabet—is the great inscription of Mesa, King of Moab, discovered in 1868, and going back to the ninth century B.C.[2] The special interest which attaches to this old character of the Hebrew writing is derived from the fact that it must have been used for the composition of most of the prophetical books of the Bible.

The earliest type of Semitic writing passed gradually into another more easily traced, which is sometimes called *Sidonian*, from its chief representatives, the inscriptions engraved on the sarcophagi of the kings of Sidon, Tabnith and his son Eshmunazar II., but which is more usually named *Aramaic*, from the place (Aram) where it evolved more rapidly. About the middle of the fourth century B.C. it had become the common Semitic

[1] Cfr. LOISY, Histoire du Texte et des Versions de la Bible, pp. 37–56; GESENIUS-KAUTZSH, Hebrew Grammar (transl. by Collins and Cowley), pp. 8–17, and authors therein referred to.

[2] Cfr. Plates I and II, at the end of this volume.

script, and had been for a long time already used by the Hebrews in their commercial transactions with the Sidonians and Aramæans.

As regards the adoption of the Aramaic by the Israelites in the transcription of Holy Writ, nothing can be clearly defined. It was probably very slow, and that type of writing was not employed in transcribing the Pentateuch before the definitive organization of the Samaritan community, which still preserves the text of the Law in the older character.[1]

The various changes through which the archaic form was transformed into the Aramaic script had two results: they made writing easier and quicker, they made it also, and for this very reason, less legible. It was therefore natural that when this newer type of writing was adopted officially and permanently for the transcription of Holy Writ, a reaction should take place against anything connected with its use which would betray irreverence for the Word of God. Hence, through greater care in writing, through a religious wish to obtain as beautiful a script as possible for the sacred text, a new and finer form of the Aramaic was gradually evolved which, from its general character, is called the *square* or distinctly Hebrew type of writing. It was in this character that the Hebrew MSS. of Our Lord's time were written, and ever since, whether in MSS. or in printed editions, the square form has been the obligatory Hebrew style of letters for the transmission of the sacred text.

**4. The Hebrew Text.** Throughout these various changes in their chirography, the Israelites preserved (as far as can be ascertained) for their books the one and the same form of the *Roll*. As these books were made of flexible materials, viz., papyrus and skins of animals, it was found convenient to have their various sheets, after they had been fastened together at the edges, attached to and wound around one stick or cylinder into a roll or volume, and if the books were very long, they were rolled around two cylinders, from the two extremities. The leaves were usually written over only on one side, and the text was divided into small columns with margins at the top and at the bottom and a certain space (prob-

[1] See Plate IV, at the end of the volume.

ably a two-fingers' breadth) between every two columns. When the manuscript was used the reader unrolled it until he found the place, or if the manuscript was wound around two sticks, he unrolled from the one and rolled up around the other as he progressed, and when he had finished he rolled it up again.

The obligatory, because truly traditional, form of Hebrew manuscripts for public use in the synagogues is still that of *Rolls*, but copies for private reading were written in ordinary book-form, when that shape came into general use.

While the Roll-form of the sacred text has remained invariably the same, Hebrew orthography has undergone a few important changes.

The first of these changes is connected with the division of words in our modern Hebrew manuscripts. Probably this division did not exist in the originals, and besides "if the separations between words were marked in the autographs of the Old Testament, some irregularity and neglect must have been shown in the observance of them." [1]

A second, much more important and much better ascertained change in the Hebrew orthography refers to what is called the *Scriptio plena*. This *Scriptio plena* consists in the insertion, between the radical letters of a word, of feeble consonants which could help the reader in understanding or pronouncing the word correctly. In ancient times, as may be inferred from the inscription of Mesa, this insertion was very rare in Semitic and Hebrew writing. It is probable that these consonants were used at first chiefly at the *end* of words, e.g., to mark pronominal suffixes and inflectional terminations, which were important for the sense, and it is certain that their common use, to mark long vowels in general, belongs to a late stage in Hebrew orthography.

The last change we shall mention here is connected with the suffix of the third person singular masculine, whose original form was gradually transformed and shortened as to its spelling. As a result of the non-recognition of this orthographic change, errors of transcription crept into our Hebrew MSS., and mistakes of rendering were made in the versions.

[1] Driver, Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Books of Samuel, Introduction, p. xxx.

Intimately connected with these orthographic changes, though much later in date, is the introduction into the Hebrew Text of signs different from the letters of the alphabet, and destined to secure the correct reading of the original. All ancient Semitic writing which has come down to us in its original form is *unpointed*, that is, exhibits consonants without these signs, or points. Down to the present day, the MSS. used for public services in the synagogues are unpointed.

### § 2. *Transmission of the Original Text.*

**1. First Period** (to 140 A.D.). Of the various periods into which the history of the text of the Old Testament may be divided, none is more important than that which extends from the first appearance of the individual books to about the middle of the second century after Christ, for it was during this long series of centuries that the sacred text grew gradually and became settled for all subsequent ages. It would therefore be very desirable that we should be able to ascertain, by means of many and reliable documents, the competency and methods of those who in the course of this first period contributed to make what is still practically our standard original text of the Old Testament. In reality there is hardly a period in the whole history of the transmission of the Hebrew Bible which supplies fewer sources of information to students of Biblical Criticism. These sources are limited to the Samaritan Pentateuch, the Septuagint, the ancient Syriac Version, and the citations found in writings of the first century of our era.

And yet by making the most of those sources of information modern scholars have got a general knowledge of the manner in which the scribes of these remoter ages dealt with the sacred text. They have come to the conclusion that the extreme care and scrupulous accuracy with which the Hebrew Text was supposed formerly to have been copied before the second century of our era are disproved by an

unprejudiced study of the intentional and unintentional alterations disclosed by Criticism, during this first period in the transmission of the original text of the Old Testament. They have also drawn another and indeed more important inference from the evidence at their disposal. They think that many, and these the greatest, variations are not simply the result of ancient freedom in transcription. Not only in the historical books of Kings, but in the prophetical writings of Jeremias, Ezechiel, and Daniel, and in the poetical books of Job and Proverbs, the additions, omissions, and transpositions are so extensive that most Biblical scholars do not hesitate to admit that the Greek translators made use of a Hebrew Text very different from the one which we have at present, and which goes back at least to the second century of our era.[1] Nay, more: these greater variations, combined with minor differences of a similar kind that are observable throughout the Hebrew Bible when compared with the Septugint, have led critics to the conclusion that in the second century before the coming of Christ the Hebrew Text existed in a variety of forms, one of which is represented by the Septuagint, and another by the manuscripts from which our present Hebrew Text is derived.

This freedom in transcription and redaction of the ancient

[1] Most of these differences will be pointed out later, especially in the chapter on the old Greek translations. For the sake of example, however, we mention here the following textual variations found in the Septuagint and connected with the books of Kings:

1. *Additions:* 19 lines after the first verse of chap. iii in III Kings; verse 46 in the same chapter (in the LXX) has been increased by an addition of 10 lines also; and in chap. xii so much has been added to verse 24 that in the Septuagint it has no less than 68 lines instead of the 2 or 3 it should naturally have, if it were a simple translation of our Hebrew Text; etc., etc.

2. *Omissions.* In the narrative of David and Goliath (I Kings xvii) verses 12–31, 41, 50, 55–58 are omitted; in III Kings ix, verses 15–25 of the Hebrew are likewise omitted; and in chap. xiv of the same book the first 20 verses are not to be found: etc.

3. *Transpositions.* In III Kings the first 12 verses of chap. vii are placed after verse 51 of the same chapter; chap. xxi occurs before chap. xx; etc., etc.

scribes was done away with some time before the close of the first period we have distinguished in the history of the transmission of the original text. How long before cannot be determined at the present day. Nor can we describe either the precise manner in which the Hebrew standard was obtained. Some manner of criticism seems to have been applied in the fixing of an authoritative text; but it is beyond doubt that the amount of liberty taken with the current text by the scribes was very limited. Indeed, it is highly probable that the uniformity of the Hebrew text which prevailed at the end of this first period implies that the Jewish scribes did very little more than adopt a MS. as a standard text. Finally, it is likely that the authorities who fixed the Hebrew Text also framed rules calculated to prevent future deviations from their authentic edition.[1]

**2. Second Period** (to the Eleventh Century). It is in the period which extends from the second to the eleventh century of our era that the rules just referred to were gradually developed, codified, written down, and fully utilized in the transcription of the Hebrew Bible. This entire period might, therefore, be justly called *Massoretic*, because it witnessed the steady growth and application of that *Tradition* (*Massorah*) whose distinct object aimed at and whose actual enforcement resulted in the well-nigh perfect transmission of a text of the second century after Christ. It is customary, however, to apply the designation *Massoretic* only to the second part of this long period (from the sixth to the eleventh century), and to call its first part the age of the *Talmud*.

By the Talmud is meant a huge legal work, made up of the Mishnah (or *Second* Law) as the text, and of the *Gemara*

[1] For details, cfr. Loisy, Histoire du Texte et des Versions de la Bible, pp. 132–146. W. R. Smith, The Old Testament in the Jewish Church, Lecture iii; S. Davidson, A Treatise on Biblical Criticism, vol. i, p. 116 sqq. (Boston, 1853).

as its discursive commentary;[1] and by the Talmudists are meant those rabbis whose business it was to codify, expound, and develop the uncanonical law of their nation. As may be gathered from the Talmud, the critical labors of those rabbis may be described as follows:

The Talmudists "did not attempt anything like a regular revision of the sacred text. They marked certain readings which seemed to them doubtful. If they met with a clear mistake they corrected it in the margin, but seldom or never meddled with the text. They gave minute directions about copying of manuscripts and cautions about such errors as similar letters. They counted the number of verses and words in each book in order to preserve it from future corruption. They recorded, but in a rambling, unmethodical way, the textual notes of their predecessors for centuries before.

"The Talmud contains many traces of their rough-and-ready method of Biblical Criticism. It enumerates certain words which they found in their Bible MSS. with a little mark already placed over them, thus showing us that at least some rude sort of textual criticism existed even before their days. . . .

"The great security of the text among the Talmudists is the extreme reverence and awe with which it was regarded. Human nature is a strange compound. The very men who practically were putting their commentary in the place of the Bible almost worshipped the letter of that Bible itself. They wrote every word in it with scrupulous care; they washed their pens before the holy name (Yahweh); they dared not alter even a plain mistake, except by a correction in the margin of the text." [2]

It is also to the labors of the Talmudists concerning the Holy Scriptures that we may refer in the main what has been called

[1] There are two Talmuds, that of Babylon and that of Palestine (or of Jerusalem). In both the text of the Second Law, or *Mishnah*, is the same; the commentary, or *Gemara*, alone is different. The *Babylonian* Talmud, the *Palestinian* Talmud, are therefore used to designate the two distinct compilations of the Gemara in the schools of Babylonia and Palestine respectively.

[2] J. Paterson Smyth, The Old Documents and the New Bible, p. 80 sqq. Of special importance are the variations known as *K'thibh* (written) and *Qeri* (read), several of which go back to the Talmudists and show that to their minds the reading they indicated in the margin (the *Qeri*) was superior to what was found in the text (the *K'thibh*). For instances, see S. Davidson, A Treatise on Biblical Criticism, vol. i, p. 117 (Boston, 1853).

"*an exegetical tradition*," or fixed method of pronouncing and dividing the sacred text. But owing to their great reverence for the letter of Holy Writ, they never thought of adding to the consonants any vowel-marks, and they simply transmitted orally the received method of reading.

No less reverential than the Talmudists towards the consonantal text were the rabbis who came after them and are now known as the *Massoretes*. For proof of this we have only to consult the margin of our printed Bibles,—which reproduce the Massoretic edition,—whenever the reader is directed to do so by a small circle inserted in the text. At times we shall find that the margin bids the reader transpose, interchange, restore, or remove a consonant, while at other times it directs him to omit or insert even an entire word; at other times, again, it calls attention to peculiarities of writing, such as the presence of some consonant of unusual size, of some letter written above the line, of dots placed over a letter, etc. Plainly had the Massoretes been less particular about transmitting even the least details of the traditional text, they would have done away with those defects which they bid the reader himself to correct, or to which they simply call his attention.

But the Massoretes were not satisfied with transmitting most faithfully the consonantal text as they had received it; they also wished, after the example of the Talmudists, to secure its intact preservation through future ages. With this end in view, they furnished copyists with ampler means than in the past of avoiding or detecting errors of transmission, and laid down most minute rules for copying synagogue manuscripts.[1]

Besides the critical apparatus so far described, and faint

[1] All this body of traditional remarks and rules, with additions by the Massoretes themselves, bear the name of Massorah, and were at first written in separate MSS.; later on they were transferred, in whole or in part, to the margins of the copies of the Bible. See Plate V, at the end of the present volume.

traces of which still appear in our printed editions, the Massoretes devised various signs to secure the correct reading of the original and placed them in or around the consonants, as we may still see them indicated in the MSS. of the period and in our ordinary copies of the Hebrew Bible. Many of the signs, like those in our pronouncing dictionaries, point out the correct way of articulating the consonants, or indicate the exact vowel sounds with which the letters should be coupled. Other signs constitute a regular system of accents intended to regulate the modulated reading of the sacred text.

By these and other such devices truly based on tradition the "Masters of the Massorah" secured a practical uniformity in the pronunciation and transcription of the Hebrew text for all subsequent centuries.

**3. The Third Period** (to Our Day). As the pre-Massoretic copies became defaced or damaged, and were on that account withdrawn from public use, other copies were substituted in their place, and these, as a matter of course, reproduced carefully what was now considered the best text, viz., that of the Massoretes.

As all our extant MSS. belong to the same family—the Massoretic,—and as the oldest among them are not much older than the others, the only distinction of any importance between them is that which is based on the use for which they were intended. According as they were destined to public or to private use they were submitted to more or less strict rules of transcription, and therefore present a degree of accuracy proportionate to the care required in their production.

It goes without saying that deep respect for the Word of God, either alone or combined with the desire of producing copies that would find purchasers, sufficed generally to render the scribes careful in their preparation of manuscripts for private

or common use. But of course, despite all their good will, deviations, not indeed very considerable, still of some importance, crept into the MSS., especially into those which were written for ordinary purposes, and these deviations from the Massoretic standard were seriously objected to by some French and Spanish leading rabbis of the thirteenth century.

When the art of printing was invented it would have been a comparatively easy work to prepare and spread a more correct Massoretic text, by means of an extensive and careful examination of the MSS. then in existence, but no work of the kind was attempted at the time. The first part of the Hebrew Bible which appeared in print was a very defective text of the Psalms, published in 1477 (without the name of the place of publication). Soon afterwards the other books were printed in different towns of Italy, and as early as 1488 a complete edition of the Hebrew Text appeared at Soncino (near Cremona), made partly from MSS. and partly from the texts already printed. The most important subsequent editions are that of Ximenes, printed for his Polyglot; that of Jacob ben Chayim (Venice, 1526); that of S. Baer and Franz Delitzsch, left incomplete by the death of those learned editors; and, finally, that of Christian D. Ginsburg (two vols., 1894).

The text thus repeatedly printed was no other than the Massoretic Text, the perfect integrity of which was long unquestioned by Jewish scholars, wedded as they were to tradition, and accustomed to trace back anything ancient, the exact origin of which they did not know, to a very remote antiquity, or to some great and final authority, like that of Moses or of Esdras and the Great Synagogue. Consonants and vowel signs and accents were supposed to go back to the inspired writers; the authority of the Massoretic Text was held supreme, and any version or document differing from it was in so far treated as unreliable.

Attracted by views which, in affirming the plenary inspiration of everything in the Hebrew Bible, made it easy to deny the necessity of the Catholic Church as the living interpreter of the Sacred Scriptures, and to reject the value of the Latin

Vulgate but lately declared *authentic* by the Council of Trent, many Protestant scholars, led by the two Buxtorfs (father and son), the great Hebrew teachers of Basle, defended with vigor and learning the perfect integrity of the Hebrew Text. They were opposed with equal vigor and ability by Louis Cappel, a Protestant professor at Saumur, and by Jean Morin, a French Oratorian, who both maintained that the vowel-points were of late origin, that the Massoretic Text is far from being perfect, and must even be corrected in many passages by the help of the ancient versions, especially the Septuagint. This has also been, or is still, the view of Rich. Simon, Houbigant, S.J., of Jahn, Justus Olshausen, Thenius, Julius Wellhausen, Geiger, Graetz, Bickell, Cornill, Driver, Loisy, Martin, etc., etc. And there is no doubt that the result of the immense labors of Old Testament critics chiefly during the nineteenth century has for ever disproved the old theory that our Hebrew Bible reproduces with perfect accuracy the original documents as they came forth from the hands of the inspired writers.

The most important general works recently started with the purpose of reaching a better text by means of the strictest methods of the Textual and Higher Criticism are:

(1) Paul Haupt, The Sacred Books of the Old Testament in Hebrew.

(2) Paul Haupt, A Translation into English of the Sacred Books of the Old Testament.

(3) Driver and Briggs, International Critical Commentary.

(4) Francis Brown, Driver, and Briggs, A Hebrew and English Lexicon of the Old Testament.

**4. Appendix.** As regards the origin, contents, and critical value of the *Samaritan Pentateuch*, and of the *Jewish Targums* or *Aramaic Paraphrases* of the Old Testament, see unabridged edition of the "General Introduction" by the present writer, pp. 215–219.

## SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTER VIII.

### History of the Original Text of the New Testament.

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**I. Description of the Original Text.**

1. The Greek Idiom of the New Testament.
   - Old Disputes between *Purists* and *Hebraists*.
   - The Attic dialect altered into the common Greek language.
   - The common Greek language in the New Testament.

2. The Greek Text of the New Testament.
   - Publication of the Originals.
   - External Form of MSS.
   - External Form of the Text.

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**II. Transmission of the Original Text.**

1. First Period (to the 5th century).
   - Early and growing Adulteration of Copies.
   - Extant MSS. of the Fourth Century.
   - All important variations traceable to this period.

2. Second Period (to the 16th century).
   - Principal Uncial MSS.
   - Cursive MSS. (Number and Text).

3. Third Period (the Printed Editions).
   - The "Textus Receptus."
   - Critical Editions.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### HISTORY OF THE TEXT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

### § 1. *Description of the Original Text.*

**1. The Greek Idiom of the New Testament.** Theological preoccupations similar to those which induced such prominent Protestant Hebrew scholars as the two Buxtorfs to declare themselves for the plenary inspiration of the Massoretic Text in its every detail, led other Protestant divines of the same and of the following century to embrace no less untenable views regarding the Greek Text of the New Testament. According to these "Purists" only very elegant Greek could be a result worthy of the divine guidance granted to the sacred writers of the New Law, and hence they concluded that "the style of the New Testament reaches in every respect the standard of classical purity and elegance." [1]

Hardly less extreme were the views of many of their opponents, known as *Hebraists* or *Hellenists*. These scholars were bent on disproving the classical character of the diction of the New Testament, and hence they not only strove to show its Hebraistic coloring, but greatly exaggerated it.

Gradually, however, the few Biblical scholars who, from the first, occupied a middle ground between these two extreme positions grew in numbers, and at the present day New Testament scholars generally grant that the diction of its

[1] G. B. WINER, A Grammar of the Idiom of the New Testament, p. 12 (Engl. Transl., 7th edit., Andover, 1877).

sacred writings is far removed from classic purity, and that Hebraisms should be admitted only in places where their presence is unmistakable.

This deviation from Attic purity was the natural outcome of the many important changes which this Greek dialect underwent several centuries before Christ, and which have left their impress upon the writings of the New Testament. The first of these changes was its mingling with the other leading Greek dialects, consequent upon the closer intercourse which prevailed among the various Greek states after their conquest by Philip II., King of Macedonia. Attic became the language of the court and of literature, with the natural result that the writers who adopted it mingled with it much that was derived from the dialect of their own district or region. This altering of pure Attic increased in proportion as the conquests of Alexander the Great extended far and wide the influence of Greek language and literature. Gradually even it was transformed from the particular language of Attica into the universal or "common" (the *Κοινὴ Διαλεκτος*) language of all Greek-speaking countries, including not only Macedonia, Greece, and Asia Minor, but also Syria and Egypt. Prose-writers used the "Hellenic" (so called in opposition to the "Attic") language, that is, a language containing words and forms borrowed from all the Greek dialects, as also words entirely new, or employed with a new meaning, etc., etc.[1]

The Greek language underwent still greater changes on the lips of the people. When Alexandria, Antioch, and other great cities were founded in the East by Alexander the Great and his successors, Greeks of divers tribes and dialects flocked to these new centres of commerce, and from their free inter-

[1] For numerous examples, cfr. WINER, loc. cit., pp. 22–27, 36 sq.; IMMER, Hermeneutics of the New Testament, quoted by Ph. SCHAFF, A Companion to the Greek Testament and the English Version (4th edit.), p. 20 sqq.

course soon resulted a popular form of language which was, to some extent, peculiar to each of these cities, and which in all cases deviated much more from Attic purity and elegance than did the literary language used by men of culture. The Greek-speaking Jews (or *Hellenists*), in particular, spoke Greek less purely than native Greeks, and imparted to it more or less the impress of their mother tongue. Under the pen of their writers, who had learned Greek much less from books than from oral intercourse with the mixed population of Egypt and Syria, the *Κοινὴ Διάλεκτος* joined to the various imperfections of the popular idiom a Semitic coloring which has caused it to be named the *Hellenistic* dialect. This is precisely the kind of debased Greek which we find in the Septuagint translation of the Hebrew Bible, in the deutero-canonical books or parts of books of the Old Testament. This is also the kind of Greek which is to be found in the writings of the New Testament, so that their style is, speaking generally, very far removed from Attic purity and elegance.[1] Of course, the Hebraizing element is not noticeable to the same extent in all the inspired writings of the New Testament. St. Mark and St. Matthew are most Hellenistic, St. Luke, the Acts, and the Epistle to the Hebrews least Hellenistic, in their diction.

Finally, there was an altogether new element added to the *Κοινὴ Διάλεκτος*, by the Apostolic writers themselves. Besides the various religious conceptions which were common to Judaism and Christianity and for the expression of which the Septuagint Version and other Hellenistic writings had already supplied Greek words and forms, the writers of the New Testament had new truths to convey, new aspects of old beliefs to illustrate and emphasize. Hence the necessity

[1] For particulars, cfr., besides the Grammar of Winer already referred to, A Grammar of the New Testament Greek, by Alex. Buttmann; The Writers of the New Testament, by W. H. Simcox; etc. For the relations between the Synoptists and the Septuagint, see Hawkins, Horæ Synopticæ, p. 162 sqq.

either to coin new words, or to use in a very different meaning from the one hitherto received the words and expressions of the Hellenistic dialect.

**2. The Greek Text of the New Testament.** As the writings of the New Testament were composed in the current Greek language of the time, so were they published in the same way as ordinary books. It is clear, for instance, that St. Paul's epistles were written under dictation,[1] after the manner of the ancients, who seldom wrote their compositions with their own hand, but dictated them to their freedmen or slaves, some of whom acted as *ταχυγράφοι*, amanuenses, notarii, rapid writers.

The first draught, written very hastily, was committed to the care of the *βιβλιογράφος* (librarius) or the *καλλιγράφος*, whose business it was to transcribe it in a neat and elegant manner. The copy thus obtained was next passed to the corrector, *διορθωτὴς*, and finally to the *ἀντίβαλλων*, who made sure of the accuracy of the transcription. Such historical books as the Gospel of St. Luke and the book of the Acts, for instance, were probably submitted to this careful transcription and correction.

Of course, at that time, compositions of any kind could be multiplied only by transcripts. When they had passed in this way to others, they were beyond the control of the author and therefore published. Christians had not the advantage of publication by means of booksellers till a comparatively late period.

The publication was preceded by the *recitatio*, which, carried out in the presence of several persons, had the twofold advantage of securing witnesses to the true author of the work, and of obtaining friendly criticism: if the composition was deemed worthy, it was requested for the purpose of tran-

[1] Cfr. Rom. xvi, 22; II Thess. iii, 17, etc.

scription, and then the work left the hands of the writer and belonged to the public.

Frequently an individual sent his literary production to some distinguished man as a present, or dedicated it to him as a proof of esteem or friendship. He who accepted the dedication of a work was henceforth considered as the *patronus libri*, and it was his duty to provide for its publication by means of transcription.

Thus, too, did the first Christian writings make their appearance before the public. "The Epistles were read aloud in the churches to which they were directed, and then whoever wished to possess them made a copy of them himself or caused one to be made. The historical productions were made public by the authors *per recitationem* in the Christian assemblies: the subject and the general interest in it procured them readers and transcribers."[1] Finally, St. Luke dedicated his historical works to an illustrious personage named Theophilus, who, in accepting the dedication, assumed also the charge of multiplying and spreading copies of them.

The books of the New Testament were originally written on papyrus, which after it had been manufactured for writing purposes was called χάρτης (in Latin *charta*).[2] This was at the time the common material of the Greek literary world, and for books written by poor authors, or for epistolary correspondence, no other would naturally be thought of.

The primitive shape of these papyrus MSS. was unquestionably that of *Rolls*, according to the custom of all the nations of antiquity who used papyrus or even parchment for literary purposes.[3] It seems, however, that the Codex with its parchment leaves, which could be written upon on both sides, rapidly supplanted the papyrus roll in the transcription of the sacred books of the New Testament.

[1] Hug, Introd. to the N. T., p. 68 (Engl. Transl.).
[2] Cfr. Second Epist. of St. John, verse 12.
[3] Cfr. Apocalypse, vi, 14.

The script used for the early papyrus and parchment copies consisted in those "majuscules" or capital letters which, from their curved form, have received the name of *Uncials*. For instance, the fifth letter of the Greek alphabet is *E* as an ordinary capital, and ε as an uncial letter, as we see in a fragmentary papyrus lately found in Egypt and bearing the date of the seventh year of the Emperor Domitian, A.D. 88. In the course of time, and as the copies multiplied, a freer mode of writing (the *cursive*, as it is called) was adopted for copying the sacred text. This took place in the ninth or tenth century of our era, and, once introduced, the cursive soon became the accepted script for copies of Holy Writ, uncials being confined to MSS. particularly beautiful.[1]

The text in the early copies was distributed into narrow columns, which had the same number of letters in each line, except in places where the letters were made smaller at the end of a line in order to accommodate words to the available space. Usually the words were written without separation between them, and this practice continued as a rule down to about the ninth century.

As regards the punctuation, *stichometric* writing, Greek breathings and accents, etc., anent early copies of the New Testament, see unabridged edition of "General Introduction," pp. 232–234.

### § 2. *Transmission of the Original Text.*

**1. First Period** (to the Fifth Century). The first period in the history of the original text of the New Testament comprises the first four centuries of its transmission. It is surrounded with great obscurity, owing chiefly to our lack of reliable sources of information, so that only a few of its features can now be pointed out.

The first of these features is connected with the fate which

[1] See Plates VI to XI, at the end of this volume.

was undergone by the first copies of the sacred text. Owing chiefly to the fact that no special sacredness could be attached to almost any one of them on the ground that they had been written by the very hand of the inspired writers, they soon perished without leaving any trace in early history.

A second and indeed most important feature of this first period in the history of the text of the New Testament regards the manner in which the words of the sacred writings were copied in the first centuries of the Church. Had the early transcribers been ever so careful to reproduce exactly the text before them, it is beyond doubt that, owing to their limited power of attention, errors similar to those of which we have abundant proofs in subsequent ages would have crept into their transcripts. In reality they did not perform their important work with all the care they might have bestowed upon the transcription of the Holy Scriptures. Professional scribes were apparently more concerned about producing numerous than absolutely correct copies, the more so because MSS. for private use hardly ever, if ever, underwent a revision beyond the comparison which the scribe made himself of his own transcript with the exemplar at his disposal. A large number of the deviations which may be traced back to this very early period were made *intentionally*, as distinctly proved by so well informed a scholar as Origen (185? 254), who, in his commentary on St. Matthew, speaks as follows: "It might appear wrong" (he is speaking of Matt. xix, 19: ἀγαπήσεις τὸν πλησίον) "to assert that these words are interpolated here, were it not that there is such a difference in many other places between the copies of the Gospels that neither those of Matthew nor those of the other Evangelists agree together. . . . The difference in MSS. has now become really great, both from the carelessness of the copyists and also from the arbitrary conduct of those to whom is entrusted the correction of the copies; and further from emendations,

additions, and omissions made by many according to their own judgment."

Of course it is impossible at the present day to give a very definite idea of the number and gravity of the differences existing between MSS. at the time of Origen, say between 200 and 250 A.D. But it is beyond doubt that, as early as the third century, textual variations were such as to call for a remedy, by means of critical revisions or *Recensions*, as they are now called, of the Greek Text. Of such recensions three are usually admitted by modern scholars, viz., the first by Origen; the second by the Antiochian presbyter, Lucian; and the third by an Egyptian bishop, named Hesychius; but we have solid historical ground only in favor of the last two revisions, whose existence is implied in a letter of St. Jerome to Pope St. Damasus I. († 384 ).[1] The exact character and extent of influence of these critical labors are unknown to us. It is commonly thought, however, that these recensions checked for the time being the rapidity with which alterations had hitherto been introduced, because they furnished standard copies, to which MSS. written within this or that particular district naturally conformed.

A last feature to be mentioned here concerning the first period in the transmission of the Greek Text regards the total disappearance of the numerous copies written before the middle of the fourth century. This disappearance was due to a variety of general causes, three of which can still be pointed out. There was, first of all, their constant use in public and in private, which entailed a great wear and tear. There was, in the second place, the edict issued by Diocletian in 303 ordering that all the sacred books of the Christians should be burned, and in consequence of which numberless copies must have been destroyed by the Roman officials. Finally, the comparatively few MSS. which survived the rage

[1] Cfr. MIGNE, P. L., vol. 29, col. 527.

of the persecutors were easily allowed to perish when replaced by those "more accurate" copies of which Eusebius and others after him speak repeatedly, and which soon spread far and wide after the conversion of Constantine the Great.

Our two earliest Codices, named the *Vaticanus* and the *Sinaiticus*, go back to the fourth century.

The older of the two is probably the *Vaticanus*, thus named from the great Vatican library at Rome, where it is preserved since the fifteenth century of our era. It is a quarto volume consisting at present of 759 leaves of fine thin vellum, 142 of which are devoted to the New Testament.[1] Each page, written in clear and neat uncials, has three columns, usually of 42 lines each. Each line contains from 16 to 18 letters, with no initial letter larger than the rest.[2] Only one column perfectly blank is found in the whole New Testament, that which follows ἐφοσοῦντο γάρ in Mark xvi, 8. The passage regarding the woman taken in adultery (John vii, 53–viii, 11) is omitted without any gap or sign of omission. Throughout the MS. words and clauses are repeatedly written twice over, and many lines and clauses are oftener still omitted through what is called *homoioteleuton*. The Vaticanus MS. is usually referred to by means of the capital letter B.

The second MS. ascribed to the fourth century is the Codex *Sinaiticus*, usually denoted by the letter ℵ. It is thus named from the monastery of Mount Sinai, where it was discovered by C. Tischendorf, about the middle of the nineteenth century. It consists of 388½ leaves, 147½ of which contain the whole New Testament, the Epistle of Barnabas, and a large fragment of the Pastor of Hermas. It is written on fine vellum, with four columns to a page. It has no enlarged letters; but the initial letter of a line beginning a sentence is usually placed slightly in the margin. The uncial writing and other palæographic details resemble closely those of the Vaticanus. It contains many errors of transcription through *homoioteleuton*. The last twelve verses of St. Mark are wanting, and the section concerning the woman taken in adultery is also missing.[3]

[1] Originally the Vaticanus MS. was a complete Greek copy of the Bible. It is now incomplete at the beginning and at the end.

[2] See Plate VI, at the end of this volume.

[3] See Plate VII, at the end of this volume.

Besides these two venerable copies of the Greek Text written during the first period of its transmission, there are other sources of information by means of which recent critics have endeavored to realize better the condition of the sacred text during the first four centuries of our era. Foremost among these sources we may mention here the writings of Origen († 254), of Eusebius of Cæsarea († 340), of St. Jerome († 420), together with the ancient Latin and Syriac versions of the New Testament. The data thus supplied have conclusively proved that all the variations of real importance (historical, dogmatic, exegetical, etc.) connected with the Greek Text are directly or indirectly traceable to this early period. This is the case, as already stated, with the omission of the last twelve verses of our second Gospel, of the section concerning the woman taken in adultery. This is also the case with the passage on the periodical descent of the angel of the Lord, troubling the pool of Bethesda, for the healing of the sick, in John v, 3, 4; on the baptismal confession of the eunuch, in Acts viii, 37; and with other passages, such as John i, 28; Rom. ix, 5; I Tim. iii, 16; I John v, 7, 8; etc.[1]

2. **Second Period** (to the Sixteenth Century). This period extends from the fifth to the sixteenth century, includes upwards of 100 uncial MSS., many of which are only fragments. The earliest of these uncials is called the Codex Alexandrinus (A), from Alexandria, its place of origin. It contains the Old and the New Testament almost complete, and, though later in date than either the Vaticanus or the Sinaiticus, it is of first-rate importance in textual criticism.[2]

Next in importance is the Codex *Ephræmi* (C), in the National Library at Paris. In many of its palæographical

[1] For critical details in reference to these passages, see SCRIVENER, HAMMOND, S. DAVIDSON and Commentators on the books to which they respectively belong.

[2] See Plate VIII.

details it resembles the Codex Alexandrinus, but its contents are much less complete. It is generally ascribed, like the Alexandrinus, to the fifth century.[1]

Two other uncial MSS. of considerable importance in textual criticism are the Codex *Bezæ* ($D^1$) and the Codex *Claromontanus* ($D^2$), both of the sixth century. The former is now found in the University Library at Cambridge (England), upon which it was bestowed in 1581 by the famous French Calvinist, Théodore Beza. It contains only portions of the Gospels, and the Acts, and is especially remarkable for its numerous and extensive interpolations.[2] The second Græco-Latin MS., the Codex *Claromontanus*, is found in the National Library at Paris. It contains the Epistles of St. Paul, with the exception of only a few verses.

Incomparably more numerous than the Uncial Codices, because more recent in date and more easily multiplied, are the *Cursive* Manuscripts, which were written between the ninth and the middle of the fifteenth century, when the invention of the art of printing substituted a much easier and cheaper mode of producing books. A few, however, were written in the sixteenth century. Their total number exceeds 3550, about thirty of which are either complete or nearly so. The cursive MSS. are indicated by Arabic numerals. They are written in current hand, on vellum or parchment, or on cotton paper, which came into use in the ninth and tenth centuries, or finally on linen paper, which was employed first in the twelfth century. Some of them are richly illuminated; almost all abound in abbreviations and contractions.[3]

By far the great majority of the cursives contain a comparatively late text, which is now known as the *Syrian* Text, and was apparently used by St. John Chrysostom († 407) and

[1] See Plate IX.
[2] See Plate X.
[3] See Plate XI.

other ecclesiastical writers in the second part of the fourth century.[1]

**3. Third Period** (the Printed Editions). The Greek New Testament was not printed in full before the beginning of the sixteenth century. The first complete edition was that prepared at Alcala de Henares, in Spain, under the direction and at the expense of Cardinal XIMENES. It forms the fifth volume of his magnificent Polyglot edition. The New Testament was completed in January, 1514, but did not appear till 1522, five years after the Cardinal's death.

While Ximenes' edition was being prepared, John Froben, a printer of Basle, hearing of the Cardinal's design, and desirous to anticipate it, asked the celebrated Hellenist, ERASMUS († 1536), to prepare an edition that would be the first published. The work, done in great haste, appeared in 1516. It was carried out with little criticism on the basis of only four cursive MSS., contained several minor interpolations derived directly from the Latin Vulgate, and in particular a passage of the Apocalypse (xxii, 15–26) which Erasmus had boldly re-translated from the Latin, because his Greek MS. was defective. Of the subsequent editions of Erasmus, the fourth one (in 1527), corrected by the text of Ximenes, is of special importance, inasmuch as it became the basis of the "Textus Receptus."

It was with the help of the fourth and fifth editions of Erasmus and of some fifteen MSS., that Robert STEPHENS published his four editions of the Greek New Testament (1546, 1549, 1550, 1551). The third of these, known as the *Editio Regia*, was in fact a little more than a reprint of the fourth edition of Erasmus. Stephens' fourth edition contains exactly the same text as his third, with this peculiarity, however, that it is the first printed text divided into our modern *verses*.

[1] Cfr. WESTCOTT and HORT, Introduction to the New Testament in the Original Greek, Part iii, Sections ii and iii; etc.

It was practically the text of Stephens that the brothers Bonaventure and Abraham ELZEVIR, enterprising publishers of Leyden, in Holland, brought out in their neatly gotten-up and handy editions of the Greek Testament. Their first edition had met with such success that in their second edition, in 1633, they boldly said in their preface to the reader: "*Textum*, ergo habes, *ab omnibus receptum*"; whence arose the title "*Textus Receptus*," as applied to the text of the Greek New Testament in common use during the following centuries.

The more one inquires into the history of this so-called "Textus Receptus," the less is it possible to ascribe to it much critical value. It is certain that only a few recent MSS. were utilized in its formation, and that their various readings were mostly placed in the margin, instead of being used in constructing the text. Again, when these various readings were used to form the text, they were employed on no fixed principles, and without anything like a correct appreciation of their relative antiquity and value. The earliest editors were apparently satisfied with publishing the first text which came to hand; and those who followed them too often did little more than to make choice from among the existing printed readings.

Ever since its publication the Textus Receptus has played a great part in the transmission of the original Greek of the New Testament. During the second part of the seventeenth century, leading critics, such as WALTON, COURCELLES, FELL, held it in so great estimation that they never thought of improving it by the introduction of any of the numerous readings which they published together with it. The first to undermine, but not to shake, its authority was John MILL, whose Greek Testament (printed in 1707) is based on the text of Stephens of 1550, and presents a large critical apparatus of about 30,000 various readings.

Mill's work was superseded by the valuable critical editions

of BENGEL, GRIESBACH († 1812), and Carl LACHMANN († 1851), whose labors prepared worthily those of TISCHENDORF († 1874), TREGELLES († 1875), ALFORD († 1871), WESTCOTT and HORT.[1]

Despite the wonderful amount of patience and genius displayed by all those critics to secure a final text, that is, one which would commend itself as a faithful transcript of the primitive copies of the inspired writers, their efforts have not yet been crowned with success. The process of restoration is very complicated and difficult, and in all cases where the evidence is almost equally divided it yields only probable results. Besides, while the Uncials have been well examined, the Cursives, early versions, and patristic citations require much more time than has been spent on them to allow their testimony its full weight in the construction of the sacred text.

[1] For details concerning these critical editions, see unabridged edition of "General Introduction" (pp. 253–259).

## SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTER IX.

### ANCIENT GREEK VERSIONS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

**I. THE SEPTUAGINT VERSION.**

1. Its historical importance.
2. Its origin.
   - What is legendary in testimonies concerning it.
   - What is commonly admitted (date, place of origin, authors).
3. Its character.
   - Literary qualities.
   - Textual Features.
     - Differs considerably from our Hebrew Text.
     - Points to a Hebrew Text different from the Massoretic.
     - Helps to correct our present Hebrew Text.
4. Subsequent history.
   - Rapid and wide circulation obtained by the LXX.
   - The labors of Origen, Lucian, and Hesychius.
   - Principal MSS. and printed editions.

**II. OTHER GREEK VERSIONS.**

- Aquila.
- Theodotion.
- Symmachus.

Origin and leading features.

# SECOND DIVISION.

## THE HISTORY OF THE PRINCIPAL VERSIONS OF THE BIBLE.

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## CHAPTER IX.

### ANCIENT GREEK VERSIONS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

#### § 1. *The Septuagint Version.*

**1. Its Historical Importance.** The sacred writings of the Old Testament have been transmitted to us not only in the original Hebrew, but also in other languages into which they were at various times translated. Foremost among these translations ranks the old Greek Version of the Hebrew Bible, known as "*The Septuagint.*"

It was the first translation of Holy Writ to come into existence, and long before the Christian era it was substituted in the place of the original Hebrew in the public services of the Greek-speaking Jews dispersed throughout the world. It contributed powerfully to spread among the Gentiles the expectation of the coming Messias, and to introduce into the Greek language such theological words and ideas as would make of it a more fitting instrument for the diffusion of the Gospel. Even in Palestine at the time of Our Lord, the Jewish rabbis recognized as legitimate the use of this Greek translation, and the Jewish priest and historian Josephus used it freely in his writings.

All this, however, was but the prelude of the wide influence and great authority which were to be acquired by the Septuagint in the Christian Church. To it, and not to the Hebrew Text, must be directly referred almost all the citations of the Old Testament which we notice in the inspired writings of the New. All the Fathers of the primitive Church depended entirely upon it for the knowledge they obtained and the use they made of the Scriptures of the Old Covenant. Even when Latin translations appeared, they were made *directly* and *literally* from the Septuagint Version. Indeed, it may be said that, up to the middle of the sixth century, when the Latin translation which St. Jerome had made directly from the original Hebrew was everywhere adopted in the Western churches, the Septuagint remained *practically*—either *immediately* or *mediately* through the old Latin versions—the translation of the Old Testament universally received in the Christian Church. So wide-spread, in fact, was its authority, and so great the reverence shown it during that long period, that many Fathers, among whom are reckoned St. Justin († about 167), St. Irenæus († 202), St. Cyril of Jerusalem († 386), St. Augustine († 430), did not hesitate to ascribe to the Greek translators the positive help of *divine inspiration.*

These are most weighty facts, and they enable us to understand why this old version has remained down to the present day, in the Greek Church, the standard text of the Old Testament, entirely substituted in place of the original Hebrew, why, when selecting the Latin Vulgate as the official text of the Latin Church, the Council of Trent explicitly recognized the full authority of the Septuagint; why, in compliance with the wishes of many of the Fathers of Trent, Pope Sixtus V. published an authentic edition of this same Greek Version; and why recent Biblical scholars have devoted a large amount of time and labor to determine the exact rela-

tion in which the Septuagint stands to the Hebrew Text and to its principal translations.

**2. Its Origin.** But while the supreme historical importance of the Septuagint Version is patent to all, its origin is, on the contrary surrounded with the greatest obscurity. The earliest document connected with its appearance is the legend which recounts the manner in which the translation of the Pentateuch originated. The King of Egypt, Ptolemy Philadelphus (B.C. 285–247), we are told, had recently established a library in Alexandria, his capital, and at the suggestion of his head librarian, Demetrius Phalereus, he determined to enrich it with a copy in Greek of the sacred writings of the Jews. Thereupon he was advised by one of his distinguished officers, Aristeas by name, to set free the thousands of Jewish slaves who were in the various parts of the kingdom, in order that he might thereby secure the good will and help of the Jewish authorities at Jerusalem to carry out his design. This he did with royal liberality; and a long procession of these freedmen started for the holy city, bearing with them most costly presents for the Temple, together with a letter from the king requesting Eleazar, the high priest, to send a copy of "the Law," and Jewish scholars capable of translating it.

In compliance with the request, Eleazar sends down to Egypt beautiful parchment manuscripts of the Pentateuch, written in golden letters, and six learned men out of each tribe, seventy-two in all,[1] to carry out the great work of translation. During seven days the interpreters have audiences of the king, and excite the admiration of all by the wisdom with which they answer seventy-two questions, after which lodgings are assigned to them in the island of Pharos,

[1] It is most likely from this number, *seventy-two*, that the version received the name of *the Septuagint*, which is a round figure for seventy-two and is usually denoted by the Roman numerals LXX.

away from the bustle of the capital. There they complete their work in seventy-two days, and it obtains the formal approval of the Jews of Alexandria. Finally, King Ptolemy receives the translation of "the Law" with great reverence, and sends the interpreters home, laden with rich gifts for themselves and for the high priest.

Such is the substance of a legend which has come down to us under the cover of a letter addressed by the above-named Aristeas to his brother Philocrates. Many of its particulars are evidently fantastic, and the glowing tribute of admiration which it pays to the Temple of Jerusalem, to the country of the Jews, to their wise and holy laws, in a word, to everything Jewish, points to a pious Jew, not to the pagan Aristeas, as its author. Nevertheless the *Letter of Aristeas* was accepted without misgiving by Josephus,[1] by the famous Alexandrian Jew, Philo,[2] by many early Fathers of the Church, notably by St. Justin, St. Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria, and indeed by all ecclesiastical writers down to the beginning of the sixteenth century, when its authority was first questioned by Louis Vives († 1540), a distinguished professor of Louvain. Nay, more: as time went on, the marvellous details of the legend were improved upon: the seventy-two interpreters were transformed into inspired writers who worked independently of each other and yet produced a translation which upon examination proved to be word for word identical; they were, moreover, made to render into Greek not only the Pentateuch, but also all the other books of the Hebrew Bible.

At the present day all Biblical scholars reject these fabulous additions to the primitive legend, and consider the very *Letter of Aristeas* as spurious. Many among them rightly look upon almost the whole story as a romance invented to

[1] Cfr. Antiquities of the Jews, Book xii, chap. ii.

[2] De Vita Moysis, Book ii, § 5.

add to the authority of the oldest Greek Version of the Jewish "Law." Yet from other considerations—especially from the study of the features of the translation—it is generally admitted that the translation of the Pentateuch was made in Alexandria by Egyptian Jews about the middle of the third century before Christ, and that it formed the first instalment of the Greek Version of the Old Testament known as the Septuagint.

The other books of the Hebrew Bible were translated subsequently; some probably—the Psalms, for instance—for liturgical purposes; others, as may be inferred from the Prologue to Ecclesiasticus, with a view to spread their doctrinal and ethical teachings. Whether they were rendered into Greek soon after the translation of the Pentateuch had appeared cannot be determined with certainty. In fact, all that we really know about this point is that, at the time when the Prologue to Ecclesiasticus was written (about B.C. 130), almost all these books had been already translated for some time. Nor have we more definite information about the *place* where the translation was made, as also the *number* and *qualifications* of the translators. It is universally admitted, however, that the variations noticeable in the renderings of identical expressions and of parallel passages repeated in several of these books point to several translators, and that the difference in merit of the various portions of the translation proves that the interpreters were men of very different attainments in literary skill and in Hebrew scholarship.

**3. Character of the Septuagint Version.** One of the most remarkable features exhibited by the Septuagint Version is connected with the Greek language in which it is written. As has been stated in Chapter VIII, the Greek employed by the Jewish interpreters was a popular form of the *Κοινὴ Διάλεκτος*, which deviated much more from Attic purity than did the language used by men of culture.

The Septuagint translators lacked also a real command of Hebrew. The sacred tongue was either dead or dying, and all their knowledge of it was acquired by oral teaching, by habitual reading of the original text, and by speaking, though in a corrupt form, Hebrew among themselves. In the complete absence of grammars and dictionaries, they had to fall back upon tradition in regard to the interpretation of difficult passages, when, indeed, such interpretation had been handed down by tradition. Thus were they greatly hampered in their work, being obliged to deal with two languages, neither of which they had really mastered, and whose grammar, syntax, and genius are so different from each other. No wonder, then, that their Greek, already far from classical, should furthermore be marred—as it is in reality—by Hebrew idioms, translated word for word, and that we should even at times notice Hebrew words simply transcribed in Greek letters, because they were unable to give their exact meaning. Of course, in all such cases, the manner in which the Jewish interpreters dealt with the text is objectionable from a literary standpoint. But, as recent scholars have justly remarked, it has the advantage of proving the general faithfulness of the translators, and of enabling us to determine with certainty the exact reading which was found in their Hebrew manuscripts.

It is plain, moreover, that they resorted to such methods of literal translation only in places where they were not able to furnish the reader with something more satisfactory; for their constant aim was to convey with great distinctness what they considered to be the exact meaning of the original. For this laudable purpose they repeatedly changed the pronoun which represented the subject or object of a sentence into the name of the person or thing alluded to; thus, instead of "*he*" or "*him*" in the original, we find "*David*" or "*Solomon*," etc., in the Greek translation,

Again, they did not scruple to add a word or two to render clearer the meaning of an obscure sentence, or to supply what appeared to be an ellipsis in the Hebrew Text.

At other times exegetical considerations have had great weight with the Greek interpreters, and have led them to handle the text with a freedom which we would hardly consider allowable nowadays to translators of the sacred text. Not only did they suppress the ancient proper name of the God of Israel, the true pronunciation of which is Yahweh, and substitute in its place the phrase Ὁ Κύριος (the Lord), but they sedulously changed expressions which they thought could be misunderstood or used to establish some false doctrine. Thus in the Hebrew Text of Exodus xxiv, 10, we read that the ancients of Israel who went up towards Mount Sinai with Moses "saw the God of Israel." This expression, it was thought, could not be rendered literally without suggesting that the spiritual God can be seen by the bodily eyes of men, and without offering an apparent contradiction to Exodus xxxiii, 20, "No man shall see Me and live." In consequence the translators changed it and said: "They saw *the place* where the God of Israel had stood." In like manner, the Hebrew phrase "to see the form of Yahweh" becomes in the same version "to see the glory of God."[1] Similar anthropomorphisms were so modified as to remove much of their unwelcome character; as, for instance, when the Hebrew expressions in Genesis xvi, 6: "It *repented* Yahweh that He had made man on the earth, and it *grieved* Him at *His heart*, and said . . . ," are changed into: "God *thought* that He had made man on the earth, and He *reflected*, and said . . ." Obviously, in these and like cases, the primitive reading is that of the Hebrew Text.

Such, then, are the principal literary features exhibited by the Septuagint Version. They appear in all its books, al-

[1] Cfr. Numb. xii, 8; Ps. xvii (in Greek, Ps. xvi), 15, etc.

though, as might naturally be expected, their character varies considerably in its several parts. Thus, for instance, the Pentateuch is by far the best rendered in respect of clearness, care, and elegance; on the contrary, the translation of Isaias is poor and paraphrastic; the translation of Job and Proverbs bespeaks a fair knowledge of Hebrew, together with a comparatively free handling of the text, while that of Ezechiel, Paralipomenon, Canticle of Canticles, and Ecclesiastes is very literal.

It is plain, therefore, that the oldest Greek Version of the Hebrew Bible bears in its style the impress of the various circumstances of time and place in the midst of which it was made, and of the exegetical views of the translators. Nor is it less certain that these literary features must not be lost sight of whenever we wish to utilize the LXX for the improvement of our present Hebrew Text, although they cannot in any way compare in importance with the textual features which we have now briefly to point out.[1]

The first of these textual features regards the numerous and important differences which exist between the Septuagint and our Hebrew Bible. The *Pentateuch* is certainly the portion of Holy Writ in which these textual differences are least considerable. And yet, even in the Pentateuch, especially in the book of Exodus, Biblical scholars have pointed out several important variations from the Hebrew Text in the form of additions, omissions, inversions, etc.[2] They have, moreover, noticed that throughout the Pentateuch the Septuagint presents numberless differences of detail which are not without significance.

Many of the variations noticeable in the *Books of Kings* are far more extensive. Thus in III Kings we remark after the first verse of chap. iii an addition of 19 lines; verse 46 in the same chapter (in the Septuagint) has been increased by an addi-

[1] As in sketching the History of the Old Testament Canon we examined the fact that the Septuagint contains several books and parts of books over and above those of the Hebrew Bible, we shall not treat here of this most important textual difference between the LXX and the Hebrew Text.

[2] Cfr. Numb. iv, 14; x, 6; Exod. xii, 10; xxviii, 23–28; xxxv, 13–18; etc.

tion of 19 lines also; and in chap. xii so much has been added to verse 24 that in the LXX it has 68 long lines instead of the two or three it should naturally have if it were a simple translation of our Hebrew Text. Several omissions are on the same extensive scale as the additions just spoken of. Thus, in the narrative of David and Goliath in chap. xvii of the first book of Kings, the Septuagint omits the verses 12–31, 41, 50, 55–58; again, in III Kings, chap. ix, verses 15–25, recording Solomon's dealings with Pharao, with the remnant of the Chanaanite population, and with his own subjects, are entirely omitted; in chap. xiv of the same book the first twenty verses containing the prediction of the fate of the family of Jeroboam are likewise omitted; etc. Transpositions of long passages are also to be found in the Septuagint Version; as, for instance, in III Kings, where the first twelve verses of chap. vii are placed after verse 51 of the same chapter, and where chap. xxi occurs before chap. xx.

The *Prophetical Writings* abound likewise in important textual differences. This is especially true of Ezechiel, and more particularly still of *Jeremias*.[1] In the last-named prophet the oracles "Against the Nations" contained in chaps. xlvi–li in the Hebrew are inserted—and in a different order—immediately after chap. xxiv, 13, in the Septuagint. Besides these transpositions we find important omissions (chap. xvii, 1–4; xxvii, a great part of verses 5–22; xxix, 16–20; xxxiii, 14–26; xxxix, 4–13; etc., etc.). In fact, no less than 2700 words, or one-eighth of the entire book, are not represented in this oldest Greek translation.

The textual differences exhibited by the book of Jeremias have more than their counterpart in at least one of the poetical works of the Bible, viz., the book of *Proverbs*. They are most considerable in the second part of this book, and consist in (1) *omissions:* xi, 4; xiii, 6; xvi, 1–4; xviii, 23–24; xix, 1–2; xx, 14–19; xxi, 5; xxii, 6; xxiii, 23; xxiv, 8; (2) *transpositions:* the third verse of chap. xix in the Hebrew is the last verse of chap. xviii in the Septuagint; in chap. xx of the LXX verses 20–22 are placed between verses 9 and 10; after verse 22 of chap. xxiv we read xxix, 27, followed by four distichs nowhere

[1] We do not intend to dwell here on the textual features of the book of *Daniel*, the Septuagint translation of which differs very much from the Hebrew Text, and was supplanted in the Church by that of Theodotion in the second part of the second century.

found in the Hebrew; etc.; (3) *additions:* proverbs are inserted between x, 4 and x, 5; xi, 16 and xi, 17; xii, 11 and xii, 12; in chap. xvi no less than five proverbs not found in the Hebrew Text are also added; etc., etc.

In the book of *Job* we notice most important omissions. Unfortunately, even in the Codex Vaticanus the Septuagint translation of this book has been much tampered with, so that it has long been difficult to realize their number and character. Within the last few years, however, copies of the book of Job in an Egyptian translation called the *Sahidic* have been discovered, and have allowed some Biblical scholars to reach conclusions which they consider definitive about these omissions, for both intrinsic and extrinsic reasons tend to prove that the Egyptian translation was made directly from the Septuagint when this Greek Version was still in its primitive form. Now in these copies the omissions amount to about 400 lines; so that the whole book, as it probably stood originally in the Septuagint, was about one-sixth shorter than in our Hebrew Bible.

It is not necessary that we should pursue further this indication of textual differences between the LXX and the original Hebrew. Those which have just been pointed out are more than sufficient to vindicate the general position assumed by most recent Biblical scholars, Catholic and Protestant alike. Even admitting that a large number of minor variations are due to mistakes on the part of the Septuagint interpreters, to a freedom of translation which amounts to paraphrase, etc., it is certain that the numerous and larger variations above mentioned lead to the conclusion that the Hebrew Text which lay before the Greek translators differed very considerably from the Hebrew Text in the form in which it has come down to us. This conclusion is pressed upon us especially in connection with the books distinct from the Pentateuch, for the larger differences noticeable in them are so extensive, so numerous, so constantly combined with minor variations of a similar kind that they clearly point to a Hebrew original different from the Massoretic

Text.[1] But even in regard to the Pentateuch this same conclusion should be admitted, because on the one hand there is a very large number of passages in which the text presupposed by the Septuagint agrees with the Samaritan Pentateuch over against the readings of our Hebrew Bible, and on the other hand there is no ground for affirming that the LXX was influenced by the Samaritan Pentateuch or vice versa.

The claims of each of these two forms of the Hebrew Text to represent the very words of the primitive copies have been greatly exaggerated by their respective advocates, and it is only gradually that more moderate, and consequently more correct, views have been adopted by Biblical critics. At the present day all well-informed and unprejudiced scholars admit that in a very large number of cases the purer reading has been preserved by the old Greek translation, and that "there are few books of the Old Testament in which the Massoretic Text may not, more or less frequently, be emended by help of the LXX." [2]

It should be noticed, however, that in the correction of the Hebrew Bible the Septuagint Version must be used with great caution, because the translators rendered at times the original text with great freedom, and also because their work underwent important alterations in the course of ages.

**4. Subsequent History of the Septuagint.** As the circumstances of time, place, etc., which accompanied the origin and gradual formation of the Greek Bible, now known as the Septuagint, are involved in the greatest obscurity, it is impossible at the present day to describe the exact manner in which it was looked upon at first by the Jews at large. It

[1] In connection with the book of Proverbs, for instance, VIGOUROUX (Manuel Biblique, vol. ii, No. 822) does not hesitate to say: "Most of the variations are derived from a different Hebrew original."

[2] DRIVER, Notes on the Hebrew Text of the Books of Samuel, p. xli.

may be safely admitted, however, with contemporary scholars generally that the LXX obtained a rapid and wide circulation. It was only natural that this version should spread without much difficulty among the Greek-speaking Jews, who, throughout the West, had long felt the need of such a work, and undergone the powerful influence of the numerous and wealthy Jewish population of the great Egyptian capital. Hardly less natural was it that even the Jews of Palestine should gradually look with favor upon a translation which would bring more easily their religion to the notice of many pagans inclined towards Judaism, and which could be readily used by Jewish apologists in their various treatises to vindicate the laws and worship of Yahweh. In point of fact, as early as the middle of the second century before Christ the author of the Prologue to Ecclesiasticus makes mention of an existing version of "the Law, the Prophets, and the rest of the Books," and whose usefulness led him to undertake the translation of the work primitively written in Hebrew by his grandfather, Jesus. The fabulous details of the Letter of Aristeas contributed no doubt to secure popularity to the Greek translation of the Pentateuch, and we learn from the celebrated Alexandrian Jew, Philo (born about 20 B.C.), that "up to his time a yearly and solemn festival was celebrated in the island of Pharos to return thanks to God in the very place where the Septuagint Version had been made." [1] Philo used it in the composition of his various works, and even numbered its authors among the inspired prophets of old. It is also beyond question that long before the Christian era it was substituted in place of the original Hebrew in the public services of the Greek-speaking Jews dispersed throughout the world. Even in Palestine it was probably used in the Hellenistic synagogues of Cæsarea, and perhaps of Jerusa-

[1] De Vita Moysis, Book ii, § 7.

lem, and the Jewish priest and historian, Josephus († about 100 A.D.), used it freely in his writings.[1]

With the rise of Christianity, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the fixing of the Hebrew Canon and Text by the Jewish authorities, a new period opened in the history of the Alexandrian Version of the Old Testament. Quoted by the New Testament writers, as already stated, used by the early Fathers and writers of the Church, looked upon by many as no less inspired than the original Hebrew, the Septuagint naturally became the Bible to which Christians appealed confidently in their controversies against the Jews. Then it was that, worsted by arguments derived from their own version, these adversaries of the Christian name began to deny that it agreed with the Hebrew Text, ceased to reverence it, and finally rejected it, declaring that "the day on which the LXX translated 'the Law' was for Israel as doleful as the day on which the golden calf was made."[2] Then it was also that the current Greek Text (the Κοινὴ ἔκδοσις), already somewhat altered by Hellenistic transcribers, became more and more corrupted in the hands of Christian copyists, who modified it, through ignorance, carelessness, desire to improve it, etc., etc.[3] As the copies multiplied, so did likewise the variations between them, with the natural result that, at the end of the second century, Christians could not ascertain which of the various readings was the true rendering of the Hebrew original, and could not consequently urge any of them in controversy against the Jews. This uncertainty of the apologists of the Christian faith was also increased by

[1] Cfr. Loisy, loc. cit., p. 29 sq.; S. Davidson, A Treatise on Biblical Criticism, vol. i, p. 196.

[2] This passage of the Talmud (Sepher Torah, i, 8) is quoted by Buhl, Canon and Text of the Old Testament, p. 119 (Engl. Transl.).

[3] Some Christians inserted glosses in their own copies. The best known of these interpolations is found in Ps. xcv, 10: "The Lord reigned *from the wood*" (ἀπὸ τοῦ ξύλου)—words which St. Justin and other Fathers considered as maliciously suppressed by the Jews from the Hebrew.

the fact that new Greek versions directly made from the Hebrew by Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus differed very much at times from the readings of the *Κοινὴ ἔκδοσις*.

At this juncture the great Biblical scholar of the third century, Origen (186–254), came to the rescue of the defenders of Christianity by supplying them with the means to ascertain at a glance the exact relation in which the Septuagint translation stood with the Hebrew Text and with the other Greek versions of the time.[1] This he did in his gigantic work to which was given the name *Hexapla*, because at the opening of his book six columns were placed before the eyes of the reader. These six columns contained, respectively, (1) the Hebrew Text in its square letters; (2) the same Hebrew Text, but written in Greek letters; (3) the Greek Version of Aquila, placed here as being closest in its renderings to the Hebrew original; (4) the translation of Symmachus; (5) the Septuagint, as revised by Origen himself; and finally (6) the version of Theodotion, which came last in the series, because the farthest removed in style from the original Hebrew.[2] The *Hexapla* formed an immense work, consisting of about fifty bulky volumes, so that it is not surprising to find that when it perished, in the seventh century, no full transcript had been made of it. So was it also probably with the reduced edition of it which Origen himself had prepared, and which is known under the name of the *Tetrapla*, because it contained simply the last four columns of the *Hexapla*.[3] Only one of these columns of the *Hexapla* and the *Tetrapla* was in fact destined to survive entire, and naturally enough it was that which exhibited the

[1] That this was the chief purpose of the illustrious critic is put beyond question by his letter to Africanus, § 17.

[2] In some books two and even three other Greek versions were added, thus forming what have been called the *Octapla* and *Enneapla*. The authors of these translations are unknown; they are usually simply called the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh versions.

[3] Cfr. Plate III, at the end of the present volume.

text of the Septuagint. As mentioned above, this was not the text of the *Κοινὴ ἔκδοσις*, but such a revision of it as would allow Christian apologists to realize at a glance its exact relation with the other Greek versions, and especially with the original Hebrew. For this purpose Origen employed the critical signs of the grammarians of his time, marking (1) with an *obelus* (−) the passages which occurred in the Septuagint and were not found in the Hebrew; (2) with an *asterisk* (※ or ⁜) the passages which were in the Hebrew and which he had inserted into the Septuagint from another Greek translation, most frequently from that of Theodotion;[1] and (3) with a *metobelus* (⨯) the end of each difference noticed or alteration introduced.[2]

While this Hexaplar Text was copied and circulated in Palestine by the efforts of Pamphilus and Eusebius of Cæsarea, the common text of the Septuagint (the *Κοινὴ ἔκδοσις*) was subjected to two new revisions. The one was carried out by the presbyter Lucian († 311), a leader of the Antiochian school, who with the help of the versions of Aquila, Symmachus, and Theodotion, and chiefly by means of the Hebrew, succeeded in bringing forth a recension the precise character of which is as yet unknown. According to St. Jerome, it bore the name of *Λουκιανὸς* or *Κοινὴ*, and was adopted in the churches of Syria and Constantinople.

Of the second recension of the old Septuagint Text less still is known to us. It was made by Hesychius, who is usually identified with the Egyptian bishop of that name, who, like Lucian, suffered martyrdom in 311, during the

[1] Origen designated by the initial letters of the names of the translators the particular Greek versions from which he borrowed the expressions which he inserted into the Septuagint Text. It seems that at times he made alterations in the LXX without any remark (cfr. Field, Prolegomena, chap. vii, § 4).

[2] As might be expected, copyists soon exchanged the critical marks of Origen one for another, or omitted them altogether, etc.: later all appeared in many MSS. of the LXX, written without critical marks, as if all belonged to the primitive Septuagint Text.

persecution of Maximus. It was circulated in Alexandria and Egypt, and is supposed by some recent scholars to have been a revision of the *Κοινὴ* made after the same method as that of Lucian, and on a Septuagint Text which differed considerably from the one used in Antioch and in Cæsarea.

After the beginning of the fourth century the Septuagint Version, as far as we know, did not undergo any important revision in the Greek churches. In one form or another, and gradually becoming corrupted in all by the mistakes of transcribers, or by their intentional mixture of the revised texts, it continued to be, as it is down to the present day, the Old Testament of the Greek or Eastern Church. The principal MSS. in which it has come down to us are, among the Uncials, the *Sinaiticus* (ℵ); the *Vaticanus* (B); the *Alexandrinus* (A); and the *Codex Ephræmi*, already described in connection with the transmission of the Greek New Testament, and containing the books of both Testaments; the *Sarravianus* (G) of the fifth century, now at Leyden, and comprising the Pentateuch, with portions of Josue and Judges in the Hexaplar Text with Origen's asterisks and obeli, etc. The cursive MSS. of the LXX are over 300 in number, and are all more or less fragmentary, 63 of them containing the Pentateuch or part of it; 55 containing the historical books; 128 the book of Psalms; etc.

The history of the printed text of the Septuagint Version begins with the sixteenth century, when the celebrated Cardinal Ximenes published it for the first time in what is known as the Complutensian Polyglot (1514–1517). His Greek Text was mainly based on two late cursive MSS. of the Vatican library, and it represents chiefly the recension of Lucian. It has been reproduced in the great Polyglots of Antwerp and Paris, and more recently in the *Polyglotten-Bibel* of Stier and Theile. In 1587 there appeared in Rome, under the auspices of Sixtus V., an edition which still remains the

"Textus Receptus" of the Septuagint translation. This standard text was framed by the best English, Italian, French, and Spanish scholars of the time,[1] by means of the Vaticanus, the Venetus Bessarionis (an uncial of the eighth or ninth century), one MS. belonging to Card. Carafa, and other codices of the Medici Library in Florence. It has been often reproduced, notably in the Polyglot of WALTON (1657) with various readings from the Alexandrinus MS., and in the large HOLMES-PARSONS edition (1798–1827), a valuable, though not always reliable, storehouse of the variations presented by MSS., ecclesiastical writers, versions, etc. The principal among the subsequent editions of the LXX are those of GRABE, TISCHENDORF, FIELD, LAGARDE, and SWETE.

Concerning the recent efforts made by critics to recover the original text of the Septuagint, see unabridged edition of the "General Introduction," p. 283 sq., and works therein referred to.

## § 2. *Other Ancient Greek Versions of the Old Testament.*

**1. Origin and Leading Features of the Versions of Aquila, Theodotion, and Symmachus.** While the Septuagint translation has survived down to the present day under the patronage of the Christian Church, the Greek versions originated in Jewish circles during the second century of our era, with a view to supplant that translation, have almost entirely disappeared. The first of these versions was the work of AQUILA, spoken of by St. Irenæus as a Jewish proselyte of Synope, in Pontus, and now considered by many as identical with Onkelos, the author of the principal Targum on the Pentateuch. St. Jerome speaks of him as a disciple of Rabbi Aqiba, and there is no doubt that Aquila's translation was made with the same attention to the most minute details of the Hebrew original as had been inculcated upon his scholars by Aqiba. His work appeared about 130–140 A.D., and was very favorably received by the Jews, to whom it proved all the more serviceable in their controversies

[1] Besides the Card. President Carafa, the best known among them are Peter Morinus, Emmanuel Sa, Flaminius Nobilius, Bellarmin, Valverde, W. Allen, etc

with the early Christians, because, under its appearance of strict literalism, it seems to have been at times biassed in its renderings by dogmatic prejudice.

Later in the same century—how much later cannot now be determined—appeared a second Greek Version whose author was the Jewish proselyte, THEODOTION. It is "to be regarded as a sort of comprehensive revision of the LXX, to which it also attaches itself by this, that it retains the apocryphal (i.e., deutero-canonical) additions to Daniel and the postscript to Job. It is characteristic of his method that not rarely Theodotion receives into his translation the Hebrew word unchanged." [1] As might naturally be expected, this translation never found much favor with the Jews at large, to whom it appeared little different from the old Septuagint Text, whereas it was well received by the Christians, who rejoiced to find therein a means to improve the *Κοινὴ ἔκδοσις*. Origen made use of it, as already stated, as a companion to his Septuagint column; St. Irenæus made use of its text of Daniel, which afterwards altogether supplanted in the Church the older translation of that prophet; etc.

The third and last Greek translator of the second century was the Ebionite Jewish Christian, SYMMACHUS, whose literary ability is stamped upon his work. Equally a master of Hebrew and Greek, he rendered the Hebrew phrases of the original into good and idiomatic Greek. He was, indeed, a model of the elegant and faithful translator, and this is why St. Jerome admired greatly his work and made large use of it in his preparation of his Latin Vulgate. As the version of Symmachus was not very closely made from the original—at times, in fact, it is quite paraphrastic—it never was very popular among the Jews.

[1] BUHL, Canon and Text of the O. T., p. 154 (Engl. Transl.).

## SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTER X.

### The Syriac and Coptic Versions of the Bible.

- **I. The Syriac Versions.**
  - 1. Of the Old Testament: The Peshitto (name, origin, and leading features).
  - 2. Of the New Testament.
    - Tatian's Diatessaron (ab 172 A.D.)
    - The Peshitto.
    - The Curetonian Syriac.
    - The Sinaitic Text discovered by Mrs. Lewis.
- **II. The Coptic Versions.**
  - 1. Number and date.
  - 2. Versions of the Old Testament: especially serviceable for the critical study of the LXX Text.
  - 3. Versions of the New Testament.
    - Text contained in them.
    - Their manifold importance.

## CHAPTER X.

### THE SYRIAC AND COPTIC VERSIONS OF THE BIBLE.

### § 1. *The Syriac Versions.*

**1. The Syriac Translations of the Old Testament.** Of the Eastern translations of the Old Testament none ranks higher in respect of antiquity and importance, after the Septuagint, than the Syriac Version which is commonly called the *Peshitto* (*Simple*).

As it seems, the oldest Syriac translation of the Old Testament goes back to the second century after Christ. It was the work of several translators whose nationality and religion cannot be defined with certainty at the present day. They were probably Jewish converts.

"Considered as a translation, the Peshitto, as a whole, takes no mean rank. If it does not reach the elevation of the LXX in its best parts, it never sinks so low as the Alexandrine translation, which may be convincingly proved if one, e.g., compares the Syriac Isaias with the Greek. Almost everywhere it conveys an intelligible meaning, and oftentimes one meets with renderings which rest upon good tradition or happy divination. Here and there its value is lessened by confusions between the Hebrew and Aramaic dialects, which are surely excusable considering the close relationship of the two languages. Worse, and more dangerous for inexperienced critics of the text, is the freedom with which suffixes and verbal forms are sometimes interchanged. In addition to

this there is the circumstance already adverted to, and whereby the importance of the Peshitto for Textual Criticism is very seriously depreciated, namely, its dependence upon the LXX. Where the Syriac and Greek versions agree against the Massoretic Text, we can seldom be sure whether the Syrian witness is only an unimportant reduplication of that of the LXX, or whether the original text on which the Syriac was based had actually so read. While the Peshitto is otherwise thoroughly distinguished from the Targums by its literalness and close adherence to the original, an exception in this respect is found in the translation of the books of Chronicles." [1]

**2. The Syriac Versions of the New Testament.** Among the oldest Syriac translations of the New Testament Biblical scholars reckon the Harmony of our four Gospels, framed by Tatian, a disciple of St. Justin, and commonly referred to under its Greek name of *Diatessaron* (*Τὸ διὰ τεσσάρων Εὐαγγέλιον*). They generally admit that Tatian's *Diatessaron* was written in Syriac, at Edessa, about 172 A.D., while it remains a much-debated question whether that harmony was compiled from an earlier Syriac Version of the individual Gospels or, on the contrary, framed directly from Greek MSS. of the New Testament.

The second Syriac Version to be mentioned here is no other than the Peshitto of the New Testament, the great standard translation of the Syrian churches, down to the present day. Its current text, or at least a form akin to it, existed, as is generally granted, in the third century after Christ. Owing to the discovery of Syriac fragments by Dr. Cureton about the middle of the nineteenth century, and also to that of the Sinaitic Gospels by Mrs. Lewis in 1892 and 1896, Biblical scholars are at variance as to assigning a greater antiquity

[1] Buhl, Canon and Text of the Old Testament, pp. 190–191 (Engl. Transl.). About the *Philoxenian* Version of the Old Testament, made in the beginning of the sixth century, and the Syro-Hexaplar of Paul of Tella, already referred to, see Duval, la Littérature Syriaque, p. 64 sq.

to the Peshitto. While many among them (such as Westcott and Hort, Bickell, Kenyon, Duval, etc.) look upon the Peshitto as a third-century revision of an older Syriac Version, the others regard it as the primitive Syriac translation, made with a view to supply the earliest Christian churches of Mesopotamia with a vernacular translation of the New Testament, and they consequently ascribe it to the second century of our era.

The primitive Syriac Version of the New Testament comprised the four Gospels; the Acts, immediately followed by I Peter, I John, and the Epistle of St. James; lastly came the Epistles of St. Paul. The other canonical books, viz., II Peter, II and III John, St. Jude, and the Apocalypse, had not been translated, probably because doubts still prevailed regarding their apostolical origin.

### § 2. *The Coptic Versions.*[1]

**1. Their Number and Date.** The number of the *Coptic* versions of the Bible is naturally connected with that of the leading Coptic dialects which were in use at the time when these versions originated. It was formerly supposed that only three such dialects, viz., the *Bohairic* (from *Bohairah*, the Arabic name of Lower Egypt), the *Sahidic* (from *Es Said*, the Arabic name of Upper Egypt), and the *Fayoumic* (thus called from a fertile district of that name west of the Nile, from which it is separated by a narrow strip of desert), should be recognized. But very recent discoveries have proved that two other distinct dialects should be admitted, viz., the *Middle Egyptian* and the *Akhmimic* (from the ancient town of Akhmîm, in Upper Egypt). This, therefore, raises the number of the Coptic or Egyptian translations from three to five.

Of course the exact date at which these various versions

[1] *Coptic* is a language derived from the ancient Egyptian through an admixture of Greek words and forms.

originated is unknown. But it is highly probable that some of them, if not all, were made as early as the second century after Christ.

**2. Coptic Versions of the Old Testament.** The two chief translations of the Old Testament are the *Bohairic* and the *Sahidic*. They were made from the LXX, and hence their readings are directly available for the purpose of restoring the Greek Text of the Old Covenant records, and only indirectly for ascertaining the Hebrew Text which lies behind the Septuagint. It is not improbable, however, that when these various versions were made, the old Septuagint Text of Daniel had already been replaced in the official text of the Christian Church by the translation of Theodotion, so that the Coptic versions of that prophet represent, down to the present day, not the old *Κοινὴ*, but the version of Theodotion. The other books were naturally translated from the old Septuagint edition then current in Egypt, and would therefore be especially serviceable in recovering its text had not the Coptic versions been subsequently altered to bring them into harmony with the Septuagint Text framed by Origen for his *Hexapla*. In this connection, the Sahidic copies of the book of Job, which were recently discovered, and to which reference was made in preceding chapters, are of particular interest. They contain a text by about one-sixth shorter than the "Textus Receptus" Greek or Hebrew of the Old Testament, and therefore embody none, or at least but a few, of the additions made by Origen for his Hexaplar edition of the Septuagint.

**3. Coptic Versions of the New Testament.** As in connection with the Old Testament, the two Coptic versions of greater importance for the study of the New Testament are the *Bohairic*, which alone is extant in its entirety, and the *Sahidic*, which exists in a very large number of fragments. Of these two translations the Bohairic is deemed the better, both as regards

the style of the translation and as regards the text rendered into Coptic. The translation of the former is "generally good and careful, so that it is easy to see what was the Greek which the translator had before him in any particular passage; . . . that of the Sahidic is generally less faithful, and its language is rougher and less polished.' "The text, too, of the Bohairic is of an excellent type, excluding the passages which appear only in the later MSS."

"On the other hand, the text of the Sahidic is less pure, including a considerable Western element, so that it must have been translated independently from the Greek and from MSS. belonging to the Western family. Thus it is reckoned by Dr. Hort as a not unfrequent ally of the chief representatives of that form of the text, the Codex Bezæ (D), and the old Latin and old Syriac versions." [1]

Of the other Coptic versions of the New Testament only a few fragments have hitherto been discovered or published.[2]

[1] F. G. Kenyon, Our Bible and the Ancient MSS., p. 161 sqq.

[2] The other Eastern translations of Holy Writ whose readings are often quoted by Textual Critics are the *Ethiopic*, the *Armenian*, and the *Gothic* versions (cfr. unabridged "General Introduction," pp. 303–305).

## SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTER XI.

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## CHAPTER XI.

### THE ANCIENT LATIN VERSIONS.

### § 1. *The Old Latin Version.*

**1. Problem Connected with its Origin: The "Vetus Itala."** Up to the middle of the eighteenth century all Biblical scholars connected the origin of our Latin Vulgate with several Latin translations whose existence they referred to a date almost contemporary with the foundation of the Roman Church. They believed, chiefly on the authority of St. Augustine, that for the Old Testament these Latin translations were made from the Septuagint in very early times, and that one of these was known as the *Italian*, or *Itala*, from the place of its origin. The first to question the number of these old versions was the learned P. Sabatier, O.S.B. († 1742), in a Preface to his collection of the extant fragments of the Latin versions before St. Jerome's time, and his view found favor with several writers after him. It was reserved, however, for Card. Wiseman († 1865), when yet a simple priest, to make this opinion for some time very prevalent among scholars. In his two letters on I John, v, 7, now found in the first volume of his *Essays*, he strenuously maintained that before St. Jerome the Latin Church had only one translation of Holy Writ, that this version—now called the *Old Latin*, to distinguish it from the later version of St. Jerome—arose in North Africa, and that of the various revisions it

underwent, the best, according to St. Augustine, was the one which this holy Doctor called the "*Itala*," from the place where it was made and where he became acquainted with it. The theory advocated by Wiseman was at first received with enthusiasm, and is now upheld by many able writers, among whom may be mentioned Gregory, Cornely, Trochon, White, S. Berger, Sanday, etc. As years went on, however, and as Wiseman's arguments were more closely examined, the old opinion of several primitive Latin translations gradually revived, and it is now admitted by such eminent scholars as Kaulen, Danko, Gams, Roensch, Ziegler, L. Delisle, Ul. Robert, Gaston Paris, Vigouroux, etc.

**2. Importance and Principal Characteristics of the Old Latin Version.** But while recent scholars are at variance concerning the precise origin of the Old Latin Version, they all agree upon its manifold importance. All admit that it goes back, at the latest, to the second part of the second century, that is, to a period much older than our most ancient MSS. of the New Testament, to a time even anterior to the various recensions of the LXX by Origen, Lucian, and Hesychius, so that did we possess it in its entirety and primitive purity, it would prove a most valuable witness to the textual condition of the New Testament Greek, and of the Septuagint Version at that early date.[1] All grant that it included not only the proto- but also the deutero-canonical

[1] We possess the Old Latin Version of the New Testament complete. Of its 38 extant MSS., 28 contain the Gospels, 4 the Acts, 5 the Catholic Epistles, 8 the Pauline Epistles, and 3 the Apocalypse. The principal among them are: for the Gospels, the Codices *Vercellensis* (fourth cent.), *Veronensis*, and *Palatinus* (fourth or fifth cent.); for the Acts, the Codex *Bezæ*, the Codex *Laudianus;* for the Pauline Epistles, the Codex *Claromontanus*. These MSS. are indicated by the small italic letters of the alphabet. Of the Old Latin Version of the Old Testament we are far from possessing a complete text. Besides those deutero-canonical books and parts of books of the Old Latin translation which have been simply embodied in our Vulgate, we have only the Psalter, in a slightly altered form; Job, Esther, the Pentateuch, Josue, and most of the book of Judges and fragments of other books, preserved in some ancient MSS.

books and parts of books of the Old Testament, so that its testimony has considerable importance in the history of the Canon of Holy Writ. All admit also that its Latinity, however rude or otherwise defective, has exercised a great influence upon the renderings of the Vulgate, and through the Vulgate upon our modern translations of Holy Writ and ecclesiastical language; and there is no doubt that its non-classical expressions form a very good introduction to the *lingua rustica* of the second century.

One leading feature of the Old Latin Version remains to be mentioned, and it is one which makes it all the more regrettable that this oldest Western translation has not come down to us in its entirety and primitive purity. Made from the *Κοινὴ ἔκδοσις* for the Old Testament, and from the current Greek Text for the New, it rendered the text with that exact literality which was not confined to the most minute observance of order and the accurate reflection of the words of the original: in many cases the very forms of Greek construction were retained in violation of Latin usage.

### § 2. *The Latin Vulgate.*

**1. Its Author.** The celebrated reviser of the Old Latin and author of the new Latin Version, or *Latin Vulgate*, was *Eusebius Hieronymus*, more commonly known under the name of St. JEROME. He was born at Stridon, a town near Aquileia, about the year 346. From his early youth he was a vigorous student under his father Eusebius, who was a Christian, and age diminished nothing of his zeal for learning. When about seventeen years old he was sent to complete his education at Rome, where he became acquainted with Greek philosophy and Roman literature.

At the close of his studies in Rome, he determined to visit Gaul, and it is at this time that he made the acquaintance of Rufinus, subsequently his rival and bitter opponent. After

a short stay in Gaul, St. Jerome lived some years in Aquileia, in the company of talented young men, who were all devoted, like himself, to sacred studies and to the ascetic life. When this company of friends was suddenly broken up—in the beginning of 373—St. Jerome travelled through Thrace, Pontus, Bithynia, Galatia, Cappadocia, and Cilicia, to Antioch, where a dream changed the tenor of his life. Christ appeared to him, and severely rebuked him for being no Christian, but a Ciceronian who preferred worldly literature to Christ.

Withdrawing from Antioch, St. Jerome retired to the wastes of Chalcis, southeast of the Syrian capital, and led there, from 374 to 379, the hard life of the monks of that desert, after which he returned to Antioch, where Bishop Paulinus ordained him presbyter. Thence he went to Constantinople (in 380) to sit at the feet of Gregory Nazianzen, and after the resignation of that holy bishop (in 381) he went to Rome, where Pope Damasus desired his presence.

St. Jerome's sojourn in Rome lasted till the death of his friend and patron, St. Damasus († 384), and was devoted to scriptural study and the advancement of monastic life. A company of noble and pious women followed his spiritual guidance and listened eagerly to his expositions of the sacred books. Then it was also that Pope Damasus bade him revise the Psalter and apparently the whole New Testament. But if Jerome had many and devoted friends in Rome, he had also violent enemies; and these, upon the death of Damasus, practically compelled him to leave the city. Bidding, therefore, a final farewell to Rome, he started for the Holy Land, spent a short time in Alexandria, to profit by the lessons of Didymus, and finally settled down in Bethlehem (autumn of 386). A monastery was built, of which Jerome became the head, and a convent over which Paula, who had accompanied her teacher to Palestine, presided. Here this great scholar spent the last thirty-four years of his life (386–420), engaged in devotional

and literary labors, but finding also time to share in the ecclesiastical disputes of the day.

Of the numerous writings of St. Jerome there are only a few whose perusal would not prove beneficial to the student of Holy Writ, for even from his historical, ascetical, and polemical works useful information concerning the Bible may often be gathered. Most valuable, however, in this respect are those writings of the holy Doctor which have the Sacred Scriptures for their direct object. Thus, many of his *Letters* are real commentaries on particular passages, usually in the form of questions and answers. Of greater importance are his *translations* of the Commentaries of Origen on Jeremias, Ezechiel, the Canticle of Canticles, and the Gospel of St. Luke, and his own *original commentaries* on Ecclesiastes, Isaias, Jeremias (chaps. i-xxxii), Ezechiel, the Minor Prophets, St. Matthew's Gospel, and the Epistles to the Galatians, Ephesians, Titus, and Philemon. His work "on Hebrew proper names," and his translation of Eusebius' book "on the sites and names of the Hebrew places," which were intended to illustrate Holy Writ, laid the foundation of the science of Biblical Archæology.

But all these writings, however valuable, cannot compare in importance with his work as a reviser and translator of the Sacred Scriptures. As, in the second part of the fourth century, the text of the Old Latin Version used in the public services of the Church had, through mistakes of transcription and other causes,[1] become extremely unsatisfactory, St. Jerome undertook, at the request of Pope Damasus, what he terms the "*pius labor, sed periculosa præsumptio*" of its revision.[2] He began with the New Testament, which he revised from old Greek MSS., correcting most likely, as he tells us he did for the Gospels, "only those passages whose rendering

[1] These various causes are enumerated by St. Jerome in his Preface to the Gospels, addressed to St. Damasus.

[2] Preface to the Gospels, MIGNE, Patr. Lat., vol. xxix, col. 525.

was contrary to the sense of the original." The part of the Old Testament which first claimed his attention was naturally the book of Psalms, because of its constant use in the liturgy, and because also of its greater alterations under the pen of careless transcribers. He revised it at Rome, in 383, from the *Κοινὴ* of the Septuagint "rather hastily" (*cursim*), as he puts it, and his work, introduced by St. Damasus into the Roman liturgy, received the name of *Psalterium Romanum*.[1] Subsequently (about 388), having become acquainted with the Hexaplar Text of Origen, he again revised the Psalter, preserving in his text the obeli and asterisks, and this second recension of the book of Psalms, which is called the *Psalterium Gallicanum*, because of the currency it soon obtained in Gaul, is the one now embodied in the Roman Breviary and in the Latin Vulgate.[2] In the same manner did he proceed gradually with all the books of the Old Testament, correcting the Old Latin Version by the Hexaplar Text, but, with the exception of the book of Job, this work has all been lost by the treachery of some person to whom he had committed the MS.

While St. Jerome was engaged in revising the Old Latin translation, he began a new version directly from the Hebrew. To this arduous work he had been repeatedly urged by many of his friends, and in undertaking it he not only desired to comply with their wishes, but also intended to help Christians in their controversies with the Jews. During fifteen years (from 391 to 404) he issued at intervals the translation of one or several books, accordingly as was requested of him by his friends, so that it is difficult at the present day to give the exact date and order of the appearance of its various parts.

[1] It is the text of the Psalter still in use in the Church of St. Peter in Rome.

[2] The two Psalters (Roman and Gallican) are found in parallel columns in MIGNE, Patr. Lat., vol. xxix. Jerome's later translation directly from the Hebrew, or *Psalterium ex Hebræo*, was never embodied in the Latin Vulgate.

There can be no doubt that Jerome was the most competent man of his day for the work of a Biblical translator. He was no novice in the art of translating when he undertook his version directly from the Hebrew, and his knowledge of the sacred tongue was indeed considerable for his time. Willingly did he avail himself of the learning and exegetical traditions of the Jewish rabbis, and made the most of the labors of those who had preceded him in the great work of rendering the Hebrew Text. He was familiar with the scenes and customs alluded to in Holy Writ, and, despite the opposition and even calumny which his labors had to meet, he unflinchingly carried out the great work for which Providence had fitted him. His method was, first, never to swerve needlessly from the original; second, to avoid solecisms; third, at all risks, even that of introducing solecisms, to give the true sense; and these are unquestionably sound principles which a translator should ever bear in mind. Thus, then, St. Jerome was far better equipped than any man of his time for his work as a translator. Nay, more: Westcott has not feared to say that "he (Jerome) probably alone for 1500 years possessed the qualifications necessary for producing an original version of the Scriptures for the use of the Latin churches." [1]

**2. Character of the Latin Vulgate.** If we briefly sum up the details given above concerning the work of St. Jerome as a reviser and translator of the sacred books, we shall find that our present Latin Vulgate is a composite version, which, in almost its entirety, bears the impress of St. Jerome's genius, and which consequently may be justly ascribed to him as his work. Viewed from this standpoint, our Latin Vulgate has three component parts. The first part is distinctly St. Jerome's work, inasmuch as it is no other than his own translation of the proto-canonical books of the Old Testament (except that

[1] SMITH, Bib. Dic., art. Vulgate, vol. iv, p. 3459 (Amer. edit.).

of the Psalter, as already stated), which he rendered from the Hebrew, and of the books of Tobias and Judith, which he translated from the Aramaic. The second component part of our Latin Version can also be referred to him, for it includes those books which he revised from the Greek, viz., the *Psalterium Gallicanum* corrected on the Hexaplar Text of the Septuagint, and all the books of the New Testament revised from the original Greek. Only the third and least extensive part of the Vulgate does not really belong to St. Jerome, for it is made up of the deutero-canonical books of Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, and I, II Machabees, and of the deutero-canonical portions of Esther and Daniel, with which he distinctly declined to have anything to do, and which nevertheless were later embodied in the Vulgate, such as they had been preserved in the Old Latin Version.

As might naturally be expected, the several parts of such composite work as the Latin Vulgate are not all of the same critical and literary value. The critical data afforded by the New Testament, although generally regarded as far superior to those which are supplied by the Old Testament, are themselves of a mixed character, on account of the two elements of which the Latin translation is made up. On the one hand, the *Old Latin Version*, which it reproduces substantially, is a most valuable witness in the history of the New Testament Greek, because it goes back to the second century; while, on the other hand, the *corrections* made in it by St. Jerome on countless points represent simply the text of Greek MSS. of the fourth century. As regards the translation of the Old Testament, it is of comparatively little help for the correction of the Hebrew *Textus Receptus*, since it seldom, if ever, allows us to recover Hebrew readings which go back to the period before the Christian era. It is true that many times, and indeed in some very important passages, our Latin Vulgate seems to point to a text different from the Massoretic; this is

not usually, however, a proof that St. Jerome had really before him a reading no longer found in our Hebrew Bible. Time and again the divergences, when closely examined, must be accounted for by the freedom which the holy Doctor allows himself in rendering the sacred text, and which is unquestionably greater than he is himself willing to acknowledge when he writes in his preface to the books of Kings that "he is altogether unconscious of any wilful departure from the *Hebraica Veritas*."

Thus his desire to avoid what he considers useless repetitions in the Hebrew narrative betrays him into a complete suppression of important particulars, as may be seen in Gen. xxxix, 19; and in the following example from Gen. xl, 12 sq., where practically two entire verses are expunged:

| Hebrew Text. | Vulgate. |
|---|---|
| V. 12. Et adduces Aaron et filios ejus ad ostium tabernaculi conventus et lavabis eos aqua; | V. 12. Applicabisque Aaron et filios ejus ad fores tabernaculi testimonii, et lotos aquâ |
| 13. Et indues Aaron vestibus sanctis et unges eum, et sanctificabis eum, et sacerdotio fungetur mihi; | 13. indues sanctis vestibus ut ministrent mihi et unctio eorum in sacerdotium sempiternum proficiat. |
| 14. Et filios ejus adduces et indues eos tunicis; | |
| 15. Et unges eos sicut unxisti patrem eorum et sacerdotio fungentur mihi: et erit, ut sit illis ista unctio in sacerdotium sempiternum in generationes eorum. | |

Again, the hurried manner in which he made his translation of Tobias and Judith—devoting to the former only a single day, and to the latter part of a night (*una lucubra-*

*tiuncula*)—explains how our version of Judith is indeed very free, and that of Tobias seems at times to be an abridgment rather than a translation of the original, long since lost, but presumably conformed to the Greek of the LXX and to the Old Latin Version.

But by far the most fruitful source in the Vulgate of departures from the Hebrew is the anxiety of St. Jerome to set forth more clearly a certain number of passages which were commonly considered as Messianic prophecies. We have an example of this in his translation of the prophetic words of the dying patriarch Jacob to his son Juda in Gen. xlix, 10, as may be seen by a comparison of the Vulgate with a literal translation of the Hebrew:

| Vulgate. | Hebrew. |
|---|---|
| Non auferetur sceptrum de Juda, | Non recedet sceptrum de Juda |
| Et dux de femore ejus, | Nec baculus (the ruler's staff) |
| Donec veniat qui mittendus est, | de inter pedes ejus, |
| Et ipse erit expectatio gentium. | Donec veniat cujus est, |
| | Et ipsi obedientia gentium. |

The prophecy of the *Seventy Weeks* of Daniel is another case in point. By adding a few words and modifying the meaning of others he gave it a predictive distinctness hardly borne out by the original.[1] This is also the case with many passages of Isaias, the Messianic meaning of which he considerably altered by what he pretends to be but a slight change in the signification of words. Thus the clause "erit *sepulchrum* ejus gloriosum" in chap. xi, 10, means really in the Hebrew: "His *dwelling-place* shall be glorious," and in no way refers to the sepulchre of the Messias; again, in the

[1] For details in connection with this prediction of Daniel (ix, 24–27), cfr. Corluy, Spicilegium Dogmatico-Biblicum, vol. i, pp. 474–513. A. A. Bevan, A Short Commentary on the Book of Daniel, p. 153 sqq.

second part, xlv, 8, we find "nubes pluant *justum*, aperiatur terra et germinet *Salvatorem*," in which the concrete terms "justum" and "Salvatorem" convey to the Christian reader a meaning certainly more definite than the abstract words "justitia," "salus," by which the Hebrew should be rendered.[1]

It must even be said that he went still farther, and gave to a few passages a Messianic character which they never possessed in the original; as, for example, when he renders Isaias xvi, 1, by "Emitte agnum, Domine, dominatorem terræ, de petra deserti, ad montem filiæ Sion," it is clear that he inserts an allusion to the *future Lamb of God* which is unwarranted by the Hebrew. In this passage the prophet simply tells the king of the pastoral country of Moab, so rich in flocks (Numb. xxxii, 4), and who formerly sent lambs as a tribute to Samaria (IV Kings iii, 4), that he should send them henceforth to Jerusalem. The exact translation of the verse is, therefore: "Send ye the lambs of (due to) the ruler of the land, from Petra, which is toward the wilderness, to the mountain of the daughter of Sion."

We might also point out a certain number of passages in which the translation assumes a dogmatic or moral bearing which seems to be outside that of the original. The most striking is to be found in the rendering of the well-known passage of Job: "Scio quod Redemptor meus vivit," etc. (xix, 25–27), commonly appealed to as a proof of the resurrection of the body. The proof indeed is clear enough, the version of St. Jerome once admitted. But, as many Catholic scholars think, that version is neither literal nor accurate. We place side by side the rendering of St. Jerome and the translation made by Corluy, S.J.:

[1] Cfr. CORNELY, Introductio, vol. i, p. 427.

| Vulgate. | Hebrew Text. |
|---|---|
| Scio quod *Redemptor* meus vivit, | Novi *vindicem* meum viventem |
| Et *in* novissimo *die de terra* surrecturus *sum;* | Et *postremus super pulverem surget* |
| Et *rursum* circumdabor pelle mea, | Et *postea* pelle mea circumdabuntur *hæc* (corporis mei membra) |
| Et *in* carne mea videbo Deum meum | Et *ex* carne mea intuebor Deum |
| Quem visurus sum *ego ipse,* | Quem ego intuebor *mihi* |
| Et oculi mei conspecturi sunt et non alius: | Et oculi mei videbunt et non alius: |
| *Reposita est hæc spes mea* in sinu meo.[1] | *Defecerunt renes mei* in sinu meo. |

These are indeed serious defects in our translation of Holy Writ, and they should be borne in mind when we endeavor to determine the extent to which this official version of the Church corresponds truly to the original text. But they should not make us lose sight of the real excellence of St. Jerome's translation considered as a whole. "It is admitted on all hands that Jerome's version from the Hebrew is a masterly work, and that there is nothing like it or near it in antiquity. A perfect work it could not be, and this for the very reasons which may well increase admiration for the measure of success which Jerome actually reached. Few advantages were open to him which are denied to modern scholars. Hebrew had ceased for centuries to be a living tongue, and Jerome, moreover, had to learn it orally; there was no such thing as a Hebrew grammar, or a dictionary, or a concordance. The comparative philology of the Semitic languages, often the only key to the meaning of Hebrew

[1] For a detailed discussion of the passage, see Corluy, loc. cit., vol. i, pp. 278–296; Lesêtre, Le Livre de Job, p. 126 sqq.; A. B. Davidson, The Book of Job, p. 142 sqq.; and Appendix, p. 291 sqq.; Jahn, Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 468 sq. (Engl. Transl.). See also unabridged edition of "General Introduction."

words, is the creation of modern times; and Jerome knew no other Semitic language except Chaldee (Aramaic), and that very imperfectly." [1]

Of the many literary merits of the Latin Vulgate we shall simply mention here (1) its general elegance, which is most remarkable, rendering as it does almost every Hebrew word, while it flows in Latin sentences from which the stiff construction of the original usually disappears. For example, St. Jerome wrote "Elevatis itaque Lot oculis vidit . . . ," instead of "*et* elevavit Lot oculos suos *et* vidit . . ." ;[2] (2) its usual clearness of expression, often due to the fact that the translator renders, as he says, "rather the sense than the words," and even adopts colloquialisms in vogue among his contemporaries; [3] (3) its general faithfulness in giving the sense of the original, although St. Jerome had before him only an unpointed text, and felt repeatedly bound to abide by the established current version of the time, in order to avoid offending the prejudices of its admirers.

**3. History of the Latin Vulgate.** Despite its literary excellence and manifold superiority over existing translations of Holy Writ, the work of St. Jerome was received at first with great opposition. From Jerome's letters and prefaces to the various parts of his translation we learn that prejudice, ignorance, envy—and also nobler motives, such as the fear, apparently well founded, that St. Augustine entertained lest "the public reading of something new and opposed to the authority of the Septuagint would disturb the Christians whose hearts and ears had been accustomed to that translation which was even approved of by the Apostles themselves" [4]—induced many to depreciate his work, or to pre-

[1] The Catholic Dictionary, art. Vulgate, p. 855.
[2] Gen. xiii, 10; cfr. also xxxiii, 1; Exod. xix, 7; Levit. xxiv, 18; etc., etc.
[3] Cfr. Vigouroux, Manuel Biblique, vol. i, n. 135.
[4] Cfr. Migne, Patr. Lat., Epist. 116, col. 952.

vent its public use in church. All the arguments he brought forward in defence of his own work went for very little with men blinded by ignorance or prejudice, and only a few of Jerome's contemporaries—among whom may be mentioned Lucinius, a Spanish bishop, and apparently also St. Augustine in his later writings—did justice to the excellent work of the solitary of Bethlehem. It has indeed been supposed that had St. Jerome been less bitter in his denunciations of his adversaries, whom he calls at times "fools," "stupid fellows," "two-legged donkeys," etc., the power of his arguments and the real value of his version would have been more readily acknowledged by his opponents. This, however, may well be doubted; most of them were either his personal enemies, or firm believers in the inspired character of the Septuagint, whose renderings were very widely departed from by St. Jerome, so that they were simply bent on one thing, viz., the depreciation of his work.

Be this as it may, it is highly probable that the very heat of the controversy contributed not a little to make known more rapidly the new Latin Version by challenging comparison between it and the older translation. In point of fact, throughout the fifth century, that is, only a few years after the death of its author, the new translation was highly esteemed and freely used by such writers as Cassianus, Prosper of Aquitaine, St. Eucherius, St. Vincent of Lerins, St. Mamertus, Faustus of Riez, and Salvianus.

In the following century "the Vulgate and the Old Latin" continued to exist side by side, and Christian writers used sometimes the one and sometimes the other. Gradually the various parts of the new version came into common use in Spain, Gaul, and even Italy, where, after considerable vacillation on the part of the Holy See with regard to the relative value of the two translations,[1] the weight of authority

[1] Cfr. TROCHON, Introduction Générale, p. 435; CORNELY, Introductio Gene-

was finally thrown in favor of the version of St. Jerome. This came to pass especially through the influence of Pope St. Gregory the Great († 604), and of the illustrious writer Cassiodorus, who, in the last years of the sixth century, enjoyed such authority with their contemporaries, and who used the Latin Vulgate in preference to the Old Latin translation. From this time forth the victory of the Vulgate was secured, and in the seventh century the transcription of the Old Latin Version became more and more rare, with the final result somewhat emphatically stated by St. Isidore of Seville († 636) that "all the churches" used the Vulgate. Early in the ninth century Rabanus Maurus says the same thing, almost in the words of Isidore, and Walafrid Strabo, the disciple of Rabanus, writes: "The whole Roman Church now everywhere uses this translation." The Council of Trent, in a decree which we shall have to examine farther on, declared the Vulgate to be the authentic version of the Church, and in doing so appealed with good right to "the long use of ages."

During the course of the two centuries which elapsed between the time of St. Jerome and the general reception of his work, corruptions of a very extensive character crept naturally into the text of the Latin Vulgate. This was owing chiefly to the peculiar relation in which our Vulgate stood to the Old Latin Version—in some books identical with it; in others differing to a slight extent; in others offering an independent translation. From sheer familiarity with the words of the older version, the transcribers of the Vulgate wrote down its words instead of those of St. Jerome. Another fertile source of corruptions should also be mentioned here. It consisted in the lack of critical sense in most of the transcribers and owners of MSS. during the Middle Ages: time and again they inserted in their copies of Holy Writ glosses drawn from other MSS.,

ralis in Libros Sacros, p. 430; CHAUVIN, Leçons d'Introduction Générale, p. 343 sq.

from parallel passages, from the sacred liturgy, from the writings of St. Jerome, or even of Josephus, and thought that they had thereby secured what they were pleased to call "pleniores codices," while they had simply added to the corruptions already existing.

As time went on, and the variations and corruptions of the MSS. were perpetuated and increased, the need of a revised edition was felt more and more. It was not, however, before the end of the eighth century that serious and successful efforts were made to produce a recension of the Latin Vulgate. Then it was that the great emperor, Charlemagne, called to France Alcuin of York, the most distinguished scholar of the day, and entrusted to him the hard work of revising the Latin Text. This Alcuin did, using for the purpose the various families of text current at the time, and on Christmas day of the year 801 he offered to the prince a copy of the corrected Vulgate.[1] Almost simultaneously with Alcuin, Theodulph, Bishop of Orleans († 821), carried out also a revision of the Latin Version and chiefly used for the purpose Spanish MSS. In spite of these two recensions, the first of which had been made with considerable critical skill and with the patronage of the emperor, the text of the Vulgate soon needed again a new recension, and it may be said that the history of the Latin Version during the following centuries "is the history of successive attempts to revise and correct it, and of successive decadences after each revision."[2]

At the beginning of the thirteenth century a new method to secure more correct copies of the Bible was resorted to. Then it was that different corporations (universities, religious orders, etc.) began to publish *Epanorthotæ*, or *Correctoria Biblica*, in which various readings drawn from the MSS., the writings of the Fathers, etc., were mentioned and discussed. These were

[1] Alcuin's recension did not contain the celebrated text of the three heavenly witnesses in I John v.

[2] KENYON, Our Bible and the Ancient MSS., p. 176.

indeed valuable guides to transcribers of Holy Writ during the Middle Ages, but as none of them ever acquired sufficient authority to supplant its rivals, the various Correctoria simply produced so many distinct families of MSS.[1]

It is true that the discovery of the art of printing supplied the long-desired means of obtaining uniform and authoritative copies of the Vulgate. But it is true, also, that lack of critical skill, desire of multiplying editions of the Bible, etc., betrayed the editors of the fifteenth century into publishing manuscripts of the sacred text irrespective of their origin and value. Hence it came to pass that the numerous printed editions which appeared before the year 1500,[2] instead of remedying, simply made more generally known the variations and corruptions which had gradually crept into the Latin Version, especially when editions were furnished with various readings, and editors complained in their prefaces of the inaccuracy of the text as it existed in MSS. Still less conducive to textual uniformity were the critical editions prepared and published by Ximenes, Erasmus, and Rob. Stephens, and more particularly the entirely new translations directly made from the originals, not only by Protestants, such as Osiander, Münster, and Castalio, but also by Catholics, among whom we may mention Xantes Pagninus, Card. Cajetan, and Erasmus.

[1] The principal MSS. of the Latin Vulgate are: (1) the *Amiatinus* Codex, formerly in the Convent of Monte Amiata, near Siena, and now in the Laurentian Library at Florence; it was written in the beginning of the eighth century; (2) the *Toletanus* Codex, in Toledo (Spain), written in Gothic characters about the eighth century; (3) the *Paulinus*, or *Carolinus* Codex, of the ninth century, and which follows the recension of Alcuin; (4) the *Valicellanius* Codex (ninth century), in the Victor Emmanuel Library at Rome; (5) the *Cavensis* Codex, thus named from the monastery of La Cava, near Salerno (ninth century), and containing a Spanish text. The other MSS. more particularly worthy of mention, though containing only the Gospels, are the *Fuldensis* (written in 546) and the *Lindisfarne* Gospels (end of seventh century), etc. (Cfr. the long list of MSS. given in SCRIVENER, Plain Introduction to Textual Criticism, vol. ii, p. 67 sqq.)

[2] These early editions were over sixty in number. Cfr. CORNELY, Introductio Generalis, p. 439, note 1. It seems that the Vulgate was the first book printed in Europe, and that it was issued by Gutenberg in 1456.

The foregoing remarks enable us to understand fully the object which the Fathers of Trent had in view when they prepared their solemn decree concerning the Latin Vulgate. They knew of the many Latin editions, some of them anonymous or even heretical, which circulated freely at the time, and of the growing confusion naturally consequent on their public use. They knew likewise of the many defects to be found in the current editions of the Vulgate, and they resolved to put an end to what they justly considered as "abuses," by declaring which of the existing Latin versions was the translation approved by the Church, and by entrusting to the Holy See the preparation of a correct edition of the same. The Latin Version which they selected was, of course, the old Latin Vulgate, and they proclaimed it the official text of the Church in the following terms: "The Holy Council, considering that no small profit would accrue to the Church of God if it be made known which of all the Latin editions of the sacred books in actual circulation is to be esteemed authentic, ordains and declares that the same (*hæc ipsa*) old and Vulgate edition which has been approved by the long use of so many ages in the Church itself is to be held for authentic in public readings, discourses, and disputes, and that nobody may dare or presume to reject it on any pretence" (Concil. Trid. Canones et Decreta, Sess. IV, Decretum de Editione et Usu Sacrorum Librorum).

When this decree is studied in the light of the discussions preparatory to its framing and publication, it is clear that the "authenticity" ascribed therein to the Latin Vulgate does not refer to its conformity with the original texts, for the term is used by the Fathers of Trent in a sense which, according to them, could be applied to an authorized edition of the original text itself:[1] the Vulgate is therefore an "authentic version of

[1] "Rogantur an placeret haberi unam editionem veterem et vulgatam in unoquoque idiomate, græco scilicet, hebræo et latino, qua omnes utantur pro

Holy Writ in the sense (1) that the Council has approved its text and enjoined its use in public readings, discourses, and disputes," and (2) that, as we learn from some theologians of the Council, it contains nothing from which erroneous doctrinal and moral teachings could be inferred. It is clear, also, that the Council of Trent, while declaring the Latin Vulgate the "authentic" version of the Church, does not intend to depreciate the Hebrew Text, or the Septuagint translation, or even the other Catholic translations made up to that time; it simply selects, out of the many Latin versions actually in circulation, one which is judged better for its purpose, and explicitly and repeatedly declares in the meetings held for the framing of the decree that the other versions shall preserve their individual value.[1] Finally, it is beyond doubt that when the Fathers of Trent decree that the Latin Vulgate "is to be held for authentic in public readings, discourses, and disputes, and that nobody may dare or presume to reject it on any pretence," they do not intend to forbid absolutely the use of other translations, or of the originals of Holy Writ, for their declarations in their meetings prove that they are fully aware that these also are useful means of getting at the true meaning of God's Word;[2] and the Jesuit Salmeron, one of the leading theologians of the Council, says explicitly: "Licebit itaque nobis salva Concilii auctoritate sive græci sive hebræi exemplaris lectionem variam producere eamque ut *verum Bibliorum textum* expendere et enarrare, nec tantum mores per eam ædificare, *verum etiam fidei dogmata comprobare atque stabilire atque adeo sumere ab illis efficax* argu-

authentica in publicis lectionibus, disputationibus." (Acta Genuina Concil. Trid., published by A. THEINER, p. 83.)

[1] Cfr. Acta Genuina, loc. cit., pp. 79–83. The Jesuit SALMERON, and the Franciscan VEGA, two theologians of the Council, have also affirmed positively that this was the mind of the Fathers of Trent; their words are given by CORNELY, Introductio Generalis, pp. 445–446.

[2] Cfr., for instance, the declaration of the Bishop of Clermont: "aliæque editiones, quatenus juvare possunt, etiam admittantur" (Acta Genuina, vol. i, p. 81).

mentum tanquam ex textu S. Scripturæ." [1] If, therefore, the public use of any other version was so strictly forbidden by the Council, it was particularly in order to do away with the confusion which was the outcome of a multiplicity of translations, and to discourage effectively the mania then prevalent for making new versions of Holy Writ. Lastly, when the Fathers of Trent decreed "that nobody may dare or presume to reject the official version on any pretence," they simply wanted thereby to declare emphatically that the Latin Vulgate was disfigured by no error from which doctrine opposed to right belief and conduct could be inferred.[2]

While the Latin Vulgate was thus proclaimed at Trent as the official and approved version of the Church, no special edition of it was as yet declared the standard text to which all copies should henceforth conform. To supply promptly such a standard, the Fathers of the Council relied chiefly on the Holy See, but the work could not be, and was not, completed till much later than they had anticipated. It would take too long to detail here the manner in which Popes Julius III. († 1555), Pius IV. († 1565), and Gregory XIII. († 1585), set on foot or co-operated in the great work of revision desired by the Council of Trent. Suffice it to say that the last-named Pontiff contributed powerfully towards it by appointing a commission presided over by Cardinal Carafa, and among the members of which were reckoned such able scholars as Lælius Landus, Bellarmin, Agellius, P. Morinus, Valverde, and W. Allen. It was, however, only under Gregory's successor, Sixtus V. (who ascended the Papal throne April 24, 1585), that the members of this commission worked very actively at the great task set before them. They had at their disposal some of the best MSS. above mentioned,[3]

[1] Salmeron's words are quoted in CORNELY, loc. cit., p. 445; cfr. also VIGOUROUX, Manuel Biblique, vol. i, n. 142.

[2] Cfr. unabridged edition of "General Introduction," p. 335 sq.

[3] For details, see VERCELLONE, Essay on the Correction of the Vulgate, in Analecta Juris Pontificii, livraison 28th, col. 1015 sqq.

and their method of work was certainly worthy of praise. Lælius collated the MSS.; Agellius compared doubtful passages with the Hebrew and the LXX; and the result of their work was read and discussed before the commission. The text corrected by the commission was revised by Sixtus V. himself, who unfortunately followed principles of correction which differed considerably from those of the revisers, and who in various other ways gave them offence. In 1590 Sixtus V. issued his edition of the Latin Vulgate, prefixing to it the constitution "Æternus Ille," in which he ordered it to be used in all discussions, public and private, and to be received as "true, lawful, authentic, and unquestioned." He also forbade expressly the publication of various readings in copies of the Vulgate, and declared that all readings in other editions and MSS. which vary from those of his revised text "are to have no credit or authority for the future." [1]

Had the life of Sixtus V. been prolonged after this act of vigor and authority, there is hardly any doubt that he would have gradually overcome the general dissatisfaction which the preparation and publication of his edition had caused. But he died in August, 1590, and those whom he had alarmed or offended took immediate measures to procure the publication of a new edition. During the very brief pontificate of Urban VII. (it lasted only ten days) nothing of course could be done. On the accession of Gregory XIV. some expressed the wish that the edition of Sixtus V. should be prohibited; but such an extreme measure was justly disregarded. According to the suggestion of Bellarmin, a revision of the work of Sixtus V. was undertaken, and was ultimately published in the same size and print and with the same title as the former: "Biblia Sacra Vulgatæ editionis, Sixti V, Pontificis Maximi jussu recognita et edita." It is only in 1641 that the name of

[1] The Bull "Æternus Ille," which bears the impress of the strong but somewhat overbearing temper of Sixtus V., is given *in extenso* in CORNELY, Introductio Generalis, pp. 465–474.

Clement VIII., under whose pontificate this revised edition appeared, began to be mentioned in the title of the authorized Vulgate. The differences of the two editions are numerous (some 4,000 in number), and it appears that at times rather serious changes were introduced into the latter.[1]

For the recent critical labors undertaken with a view to prepare a more satisfactory text of the great work of St. Jerome, see unabridged edition of "General Introduction," p. 338.

[1] Vercellone has maintained that some of these changes are connected with dogmatic passages.

# SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTER XII.

## The English Versions.

**I. Early Translations.**

1. Anglo-Saxon: Work of Cædmon; Guthlac; St. Aldhelm; Ven. Bede; King Alfred, etc.
2. Early English: Metrical paraphrases; prose versions of the Psalms; Work of Wycliffe.

**II. Catholic Versions.**

1. The Douay Version (1582, 1609).
   - The translators: their qualifications for their work.
   - The translation: method, critical and literary value.
   - Principal revisions.
     - Challoner's revision (1749).
     - Troy's Bible (1783).
     - Editions since Troy's Bible.
2. Other translations of the New Testament (Nary's; Witham's; Lingard's; Spencer's). (Archbishop Kenrick's Bible.)

**III. Protestant Translations.**

1. Translations anterior to the Authorized Version (the translators; value of their work).
2. The Authorized Version (1611).
   - Part of James I. in its production.
   - The six companies of translators (their proceedings).
   - Final revision and publication of the work.
   - Its value (literary, critical, and dogmatic).
3. The Revised Version.
   - English Edition (1881, 1885).
     - How prepared?
     - Reception and Value.
   - American Edition (1900, 1901).
     - Distinct Purpose.
     - Leading Features.

# CHAPTER XII.

## THE ENGLISH VERSIONS.

### § 1. *Early Translations.*

**1. Anglo-Saxon Translations.** It was naturally from the Latin Bible, which had been carried into England by Roman and Irish missionaries, that the first Anglo-Saxon translations were made. The earliest production of the kind is ascribed to Cædmon († 680), a monk of Whitby, in Northumbria. His work is less a translation proper than a metrical paraphrase of the book of Genesis and of several historical parts of the Old and the New Testament, and it has come down to us only in a fragmentary form. Soon after him, about the close of the seventh century, Guthlac, the first Anglo-Saxon hermit, "having one of the Psalters brought from Rome, wrote in it an interlinear Saxon translation which is still preserved in the British Museum; and not long after, about 706, Aldhelm (Bishop of Sherborne) made another Saxon translation of the Psalms, the first fifty of them in prose, the rest in poetical form." [1]

The next translator of whom we hear is the Venerable Bede († 735), who wrote Latin commentaries on several books of the Bible and to whom some ascribe a translation of the entire Bible. He is also represented by one of his disciples as completing his version of the Gospel of St. John the very day of his death. No copy of Bede's translation survives, and this is also the case with the version of Holy Writ referred to the great statesman, King Alfred († 901).

In the tenth century we meet two forms of versions of the Gospels, a few copies of which have survived in the leading libraries of England. The last Anglo-Saxon translation of Holy Writ to be mentioned here is of more considerable extent than the preceding. It is ascribed to Ælfric, Archbishop of

[1] Jno. W. Beardslee, The Bible among the Nations, p. 137.

Canterbury, and is a paraphrase in popular form of the *Heptateuch* (i.e., of the Pentateuch, Josue, and Judges), and of the other historical books (Samuel, Kings and Chronicles, Esther, Job, Judith and the Machabees). Two copies of this version are known, one at Oxford and another in the British Museum.

**2. Early English Translations.** The work of Bible translation naturally received a check during the confusion which accompanied the Norman conquest. Gradually, however, as the intermixture of Norman and Anglo-Saxon went on, and the early English became developed, metrical paraphrases of portions of Holy Writ were composed. The best known among them are the *Ormulum*, thus called from its author, Orm, an English Augustinian monk, and containing verses on the Gospels and Acts, and the *Sowlehele*, or Salus Animæ, which, along with other religious poetry, contains a metrical version of the leading facts of both Testaments.

In the following century (the fourteenth) two prose versions of the Psalms deserve especial notice. They appeared about the same time, and were written, the one by William of Shoreham, Vicar of Chart Sutton, near Leeds (Kent), and the other by Richard Rolle, a hermit of Hampole, about four miles from Doncaster. In the version of Rolle a commentary, in which he "follows holy Doctors and reason," accompanies each sentence of the translation.

This short account of the early English translations shows that if the whole Bible was rendered into the vernacular before the time of Wycliffe (1324–1384), no positive proof of it, in the shape of extant MSS. or otherwise, can be brought forth. It is not, therefore, surprising to find that, despite the affirmation of Sir Thomas More († 1535) to the contrary, most writers of the present day consider it very improbable that such a translation was made before this celebrated forerunner of Protestantism.[1]

Of the precise share of John Wycliffe in the production of a complete version of Holy Writ it is impossible to speak with confidence at the present day, seeing that mere legends or fantastic pictures have been mixed with sober history in connec-

[1] In connection with this point, see especially Jno. H. Blunt, A Key to the Knowledge and Use of the Holy Bible, p. 10 sq.; Kenyon, Our Bible and the Ancient MSS., p. 108 sq.; F. A. Gasquet, The Pre-Reformation English Bible, in The Dublin Review, July, 1894, pp. 126, 140 sqq.

tion with the composition and spread of the Wycliffite Bible. The chief facts of the case are most likely as follows: "The New Testament was first finished about the year 1380; and in 1382, or soon afterwards, the version of the entire Bible was completed. The New Testament is attributed to him, but we cannot say with certainty that it was entirely his own work. The greater part of the Old Testament was certainly translated by Nicholas Hereford, one of Wycliffe's most ardent supporters at Oxford. The remainder of it was the work of Wycliffe or his assistants, and so the entire Bible was complete in its English dress before the death of Wycliffe in 1384." [1]

A revision of this composite version was carried out by John Purvey, one of the most intimate friends of Wycliffe. It was made about 1388, gradually supplanted the primitive version, and became the recognized form under which the Wycliffe Bible circulated freely during the fifteenth century.

## § 2. *The Catholic Versions.*

**1. The Douay Version.** It was only natural that those who embraced the Protestant Reformation should endeavor to produce vernacular translations, derived no longer, as were all the versions of preceding ages, from the Latin Bible, but from the original Hebrew and Greek, in order that these new translations might be pointed out as the true expression of the written Word of God, the supreme rule of faith. Moreover, all such versions would furnish their authors with an excellent means of spreading their heretical views. We are not, therefore, surprised to find that the first to succeed Wycliffe in the work of translating Holy Writ into English should have been men of comparatively little ability and of more or less doubtful character,[2] but violent enemies of the Church of Rome, from which they had apostatized, and ardent propagators of Protestantism. They are justly considered as "the true fathers of the English (Protestant) Bible," so that

[1] KENYON, Our Bible and the Ancient MSS., p. 200 sq.

[2] Thus are they described by the Protestant BLUNT, in his Key to the Knowledge and Use of the Holy Bible, p. 24.

the history of their work is an integrant part of the history of the Protestant translations, which forms the subject-matter of the next paragraph. Therefore, leaving aside, for the time being, the study of these first Protestant versions, we shall speak at once of the *Douay Version*, which was put forth for the purpose of counteracting "their poisonous effect upon the people under color of divine authority."

This Catholic translation derives its name from the French town of Douay, where, through the exertions of William Allen, an English Catholic college had been founded with the object of organizing missionary work in Protestant England. In consequence of the political troubles of Flanders, the college was removed, in 1578, to Rheims for a time, and it is in this latter town that the Catholic translators of the Bible printed, in 1582, the first part of their work, the New Testament, which on that account is sometimes called the *Rheims Testament*. The Old Testament was published in Douay only in 1609–1610 (two vols. in 4to), although the translation had been prepared many years previously, the delay being occasioned, as the translators put it, "by lack of good meanes" and because "of our poor estate in banishment."

There is no doubt that the authors of the Douay Version were all men of learning, and well qualified to render into English the Word of God. Besides Dr. Allen, who, in Mary's reign, was principal of St. Mary's Hall (Oxford) and canon of York, the scholars chiefly concerned in the translation were: (1) Dr. Gregory Martin, fellow of St. John's College (Oxford), who was reputed the best Hebrew and Greek scholar of his college,[1] and of whom Antony Wood, in his *Athenæ Oxonienses*, speaks as "an excellent linguist exactly read and versed in the Sacred Scriptures, and went beyond

[1] The translation itself of both Testaments was the work of Gregory Martin; the rest simply revised his renderings or added the notes.

all of his time in humane literature";[1] (2) Dr. Richard Bristow, fellow of Exeter College (Oxford); (3) John Reynolds, of New College, who filled the chair of Hebrew at Rheims; (4) and finally, Dr. Thomas Worthington, also an Oxonian and afterwards president of the Seminary at Rheims.

In their long preface to the New Testament the translators, after having given as their purpose that of "opposing a Catholic version to heretical ones," state their reasons for preferring the Latin Vulgate to the common Greek Text, and the principal of which are the following: Its antiquity; its use by the Fathers and in the liturgy; its authenticity proclaimed by the Council of Trent; its exactness and precision; etc. Next, they expose the method which they followed in rendering the Latin Text. They aimed at a precise and close rendering of the Vulgate, but added at times in the margin Greek or Latin words of special difficulty or import, or even another reading, especially when the Greek was in close agreement with the same. They sometimes also translated the word in the margin of their Latin MSS. instead of the word found in the text when the latter was manifestly faulty.

Likewise in their preface to the Old Testament the editors give reasons for translating the Latin Vulgate rather than the originals. They state that, the version having been made about thirty years before by able and sincere men,[2] only a few modifications, unimportant from the point of view of controversy, have been made to their work, and this to conform it to the most perfect Latin edition (the Clementine edition of 1592). Finally, they affirm that throughout the translation there prevails a perfect sincerity of renderings, "nothing being here either untruly or obscurely done of purpose in favour of the Catholike Roman religion, so that we cannot but

[1] The text of Wood is quoted by Jno. STOUGHTON, Our English Bible, p. 226 sq.

[2] The chief translators, Allen († 1594) and Gregory Martin († 1582), died before the first volume of the Old Testament appeared in 1609.

complaine and challenge English Protestants for corrupting the text . . . which they profess to translate."

It is plain, therefore, from their own statements, as indeed from the very nature of their work, that the authors of the Douay Version did not intend to put forth a translation of Holy Writ that would have a special critical value. Had this been their aim, they would not have been satisfied with rendering into English a Latin Text, but would naturally have gone back to the original Hebrew and Greek.

From a literary standpoint, the primitive Douay Bible recommends itself by several happy features as a translation. One of these is the uniformity of the renderings. The words Amen, Rabbi, charity, multitude, work, etc., are uniformly used, while the Authorized Version, for instance, is frequently marred by unnecessary and inconsistent diversity of renderings of the same word in the original.[1] A second praiseworthy quality is the remarkable discernment in using the definite article. As the Latin language lacks it, it might be expected that, of all English modern translations, the Douay would be least accurate in this respect. The very reverse is actually the case.[2] In the third place, the translator's care strictly to follow the text before him often led to happy results, the preservation of a significant phrase of the original, or of an impressive arrangement of words. Card. Wiseman affirms that, "though one of the revisers of the Douay Version, Dr. Challoner, did well to alter many too decided Latinisms which the old translators had retained, he weakened the language considerably by destroying inversion where it was congenial at once to the genius of the language and to the construction of the original. . . ."[3] To this same care of the translators to render exactly their Latin Text is probably due the introduction into English of many Latin

[1] J. I. Mombert, A Handbook of the English Versions of the Bible, p. 307.
[2] W. F. Moulton, The History of the English Bible, p. 187 sq.
[3] Essays on Various Subjects, vol. i, p. 75 (London and Baltimore, 8vo, 1853).

words with which everybody is now familiar, as, for instance, the terms acquisition, victim, gratis, adulterate, advent, etc. Of course, numerous felicitous renderings of a genuine Saxon ring might be quoted, and in point of fact many words and entire sentences were found so good in the Rheims Testament that they were simply embodied in the Authorized Version.[1] The last and perhaps most commendable feature of the Douay Bible to be mentioned here is its scrupulous fidelity. "In justice," writes Scrivener, "it must be observed that no case of wilful perversion of Scripture has ever been brought home to the Rhemish translators." [2]

Unfortunately this desire of abiding by the text before them prevented the authors of the Douay Version from utilizing the Hebrew and Greek texts to the extent to which this would have been at times desirable to catch the exact meaning of the Latin translation.[3] It betrayed them also into a literalness of rendering which is oftentimes extreme, and into the preservation of Latin words and expressions that really need a translation.

It is clear, therefore, that this distinctly Catholic Version of Holy Writ had many features to commend it to the esteem and love of the faithful at large, and it is not surprising to find that, despite its bulky appearance, it was well received at the time and soon reprinted with but slight alterations. But of course its great defect of excessive literalness, joined to the inconvenience of its size,[4] and to the gradual changes introduced into the English language, made it more and more desirable that it should be revised and published in a handier form. The first to take up the responsible work of revision was Dr. Challoner, the Vicar Apostolic of the London

[1] For examples, see MOMBERT, loc. cit., p. 306.

[2] The text of SCRIVENER is quoted by COTTON, Rhemes and Douay, p. 156.

[3] Card. WISEMAN, loc. cit., p. 79 sqq., shows clearly how necessary it is to go back to the originals to make out the exact meaning of the Latin Version.

[4] It was published originally in quarto volumes.

district, to whom the English Church is so much indebted. The first edition of this revision appeared in 1749, and consisted of the New Testament only (12mo). It professed to be "newly revised and corrected according to the Clementine edition of the Scriptures," but gave no manner of information as to the principle, the source, or the extent of the alterations introduced into the old version. Dr. Challoner apparently aimed at rendering the text more intelligible, and on that account he substituted modern words and constructions for the old, and usual or even familiar expressions for those that were obsolete or less known. At times he adopts the readings of the Authorized Version by preference to those of the Douay Bible, and he undoubtedly sacrifices force and vividness when he dispenses with even the happiest inversions of words.[1]

As long as Bishop Challoner lived no editions were published except such as followed his revision. Hardly was he dead, when a Dublin priest, named Bernard MacMahon, published, in 1783, a new revision of the New Testament, in 12mo, with the formal approbation of his archbishop. This new edition was made on the basis of Challoner's Text, but with still more considerable variations from the Rheims Testament. Eight years afterwards, on the invitation of Dr. Troy, the actual incumbent of the See of Dublin, Father MacMahon published a revised edition of the whole Bible (in 4to), which came to be known as Dr. Troy's Bible. This gave him an opportunity of introducing numerous other changes into the text of the New Testament, but as regards the Douay Version of the Old Testament there is little difference between his text and that of Dr. Challoner.[2]

Of the many editions subsequent to Dr. Troy's Bible there may be distinguished four principal types, which we think are still current. As regards the Old Testament, these

[1] For details, see NEWMAN, Tracts Theological and Ecclesiastical, p. 414 sqq. (London edition, Longmans & Co., 1891.)

[2] NEWMAN, loc. cit., p. 416.

various editions represent one, and practically only one, received text, viz., that of Bishop Challoner, which did not undergo any material alterations in the course of the nineteenth century.[1] As regards the New Testament, the text represented by these same four editions varies much more considerably; so that at the present day there is really no one received text of the Rheims Testament among English-speaking Catholics.[2]

**2. Other Translations of the New Testament.** Even before any revision of the Douay Bible was attempted, its various defects had been so strongly felt that two Catholic priests undertook and carried out an altogether new translation of the New Testament. The first of these was Cornelius Nary, parish priest of St. Michan's, Dublin, who published his work in 1718, with the approbation of four Irish divines, of Paris and Dublin. The other was Dr. Robert Witham, President of the College of Douay since 1714, who had openly blamed Nary's pretension to give a *literal* translation of the New Testament. In his work, published in 1730, the English was modernized, and the translation was superior in many ways to that of Dr. Nary. Despite, however, Witham's high position and repute for learning, despite also the convenient size of his edition and the real value of his version, a new edition of the Douay Bible was published as early as 1738, and his work, like that of Fr. Nary, was finally superseded by the revision of Dr. Challoner, which appeared in 1749.

It must be confessed that the fate of these two translations of the New Testament was calculated to discourage forever attempts at new versions of the sacred text. In point of fact, a whole century elapsed before a work of the kind was given, and then anonymously, to the public, under the title of "A New Version of the Four Gospels, with notes critical and explanatory, by a Catholic" (London, 1836). The author, whose name was soon known, was Dr. John Lingard, the celebrated English historian. The translation is for the most part from the Greek, although occasionally the reading of the Latin Vulgate is ad-

[1] The only exception to this is connected with the work of Archbishop Kenrick.

[2] Cfr. unabridged edition of "General Introduction."

hered to. The notes subjoined to each page are highly deserving of attention. Archbishop Kenrick speaks of the work as "elegant," and of the notes as "few in number, but luminous";[1] while Cardinal Wiseman[2] says: "Throughout the notes and preface there is a drift . . . which has our cordial approbation . . ." and "we take pleasure in bearing witness to the learning, diligence, and acuteness of the author." Nevertheless the confined and partial nature of the new version, which comprised only the Gospels, together with the hold which the Douay Bible had upon the memory of the clergy and laity, naturally prevented the translation of Dr. Lingard not only from superseding the one then in general circulation, but even from being as fully appreciated as it deserved.

The latest and in several respects the best translation of the Gospels was put forth in 1898, by the Very Rev. Francis A. Spencer, O.P., under the title of "The Four Gospels. A new Translation from the Greek direct, with Reference to the Vulgate, and the Ancient Syriac Version." The learned author follows no single MS. or printed edition of the New Testament Greek. The drift of his marginal notes is chiefly critical, and his foot-notes are short, clear, and usually correct. The usefulness of the book is enhanced by a *harmony* of the Synoptic Gospels, indicated in the inner margins, and by the mention of the Gospels for the Sundays and principal feasts of the year, in the margin opposite the opening words.[3]

## § 3. *The Protestant Translations.*

**1. Translations Anterior to the Authorized Version.** As already stated, the first men whose work exercised a real influence upon the gradual formation of the Protestant English Bible, and who, on that account, are reckoned as its true ancestors, had little to recommend them as translators of Holy Writ. "They had," says Blunt,[4] "too easy a confidence in their own abilities for this great work; and their translations met with an

[1] The New Testament, by Francis P. Kenrick, 2d edit., Baltimore, 1862. General Introduction.

[2] Essay on The Catholic Versions of Scripture written on the occasion of Lingard's Translation. (Essays, vol. i, p. 100.)

[3] Concerning the Aim, Text, and Annotations of Archbishop Kenrick's Bible, see unabridged "General Introduction," pp. 356–358.

[4] A Key to the Knowledge and Use of the Holy Bible, p. 24.

opposition from more learned scholars which has thrown a sad shadow of disunion over the history of the Reformation Version of the Bible. Nor were the characters of the translators themselves such as were likely to command the respect of men under the responsibility of important offices in the Church." These words of a Protestant writer are not too severe to describe such men as (1) William TYNDALE (1471–1536), a Franciscan priest, who, having turned out a Protestant, undertook to publish a translation of the whole Bible from the original text, though he had but little knowledge of Hebrew;[1] (2) Miles COVERDALE (1487?–1568), an Augustinian monk, also an apostate from Catholicism, who "was no Greek or Hebrew scholar,"[2] although he is said to have assisted Tyndale in his rendering of the Pentateuch, so that his Bible was "only translated from the Dutch (i.e., German) and Latin"; and finally (3) John ROGERS (1500?–1555), also an apostate priest, who became a zealous reformer, and whose work in connection with the English Bible was practically limited to a slightly revised edition of the work of those who had gone before him.

It is neither necessary nor useful to give here details about the respective work of the three translators just mentioned. That of Tyndale, on the New Testament, was unquestionably the one destined to influence most the subsequent editions of the Protestant Bible, and the *revisers* of the Authorized Version in 1881 speak of "Tyndale's translation of the New Testament as the true primary version, for the versions that followed were either substantially reproductions of it in its final shape, or revisions of versions that had been themselves almost entirely based on it."[3] Of the Old Testament, Tyndale published himself only his translation of the Pentateuch and Jonas; the rest of his work (from Josue to II Chronicles inclusively) was embodied by John Rogers in what has been called the Matthew's Bible, from the pseudonym of "Thomas Matthew" which stood at the foot of the dedication. The work of Coverdale had as its principal merit that of being the first complete English Bible published,[4] whereas that of John Rogers is especially worthy of

[1] Cfr. SMITH, Dictionary of the Bible, vol. iv, pp. 3427 sq., 3431.

[2] KENYON, Our Bible and the Ancient MSS., p. 218.

[3] Preface to the Revised Version, p. v.

[4] The Psalter of Coverdale is the basis of the version of the Psalms still found in the Book of Common Prayer.

notice as marking the beginning of those revised editions which multiplied as time went on, and which are known in history under the names of the *Great Bible* (1539–1541), *Taverner's Bible* (1539), the *Geneva Bible* (1557–1560), and finally the *Bishops' Bible* (1578).[1]

**2. The Authorized Version (1611).** It was at the conference held at Hampton Court between the Conformists and the Puritans (Jan. 14, 16, and 18, 1604), and presided over by James I., that Dr. John Reynolds, leader of the Puritans, suggested to the king the desirableness of a new translation of Holy Writ, on the ground that the "versions allowed in the reigns of Henry VIII. and Edward VI. were corrupt and not answerable to the truth of the original." The king at once declared himself favorable to a new translation, but objected to any notes being appended, declaring that those of the Geneva Version were untrue and seditious. Nothing, however, was settled at the conference beyond the hope thus held out.

On the 22d of July, in the same year, the king, who had become interested in the project of a new version, announced that he had chosen fifty-four learned men to do the work, but without any expense to himself. Professing his own poverty, he held out before the revisers the hope of Church preferment, giving order to the bishops to that effect; while for their immediate expenses he called, though in vain, upon the bishops and chapters to contribute towards the required fund. At the Chancellor's suggestion, the translators met at the universities, where they received board and lodging free of cost. The list of the revisers contains the names of forty-seven scholars only, who formed themselves into six companies, two meeting at Westminster, two at Cambridge, and two at Oxford, and the parts of the original which each company undertook

[1] For details concerning these revised editions, see unabridged "General Introduction," p. 360, and works there cited.

to translate were distributed among the members.[1] They were to work according to fifteen rules, drawn up probably by Bancroft, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and endorsed by the king. The Bishops' Bible was to be followed, and as little altered as the truth of the original would permit. The old ecclesiastical words were to be kept, viz., the word *church* not to be translated *congregation*, etc. No marginal notes were to be affixed, except for the explanation of the Hebrew and Greek words which might require it. Each member of a company must first translate a passage, then his work must be submitted to the company to which he belonged, and finally revised by the other companies, ultimate differences of opinion being reserved to a general meeting of six members of each company. Learned men outside the board of revisers might be consulted, and the versions to be used when they agreed better with the original than the Bishop's Bible were pointed out to the translators.[2]

How closely these rules were adhered to cannot be ascertained at the present day; for it does not appear that any of the correspondence connected with the execution of the work or any minutes of the revisers' meetings for conference are now extant. "Never," rightly observes Scrivener, "was a great enterprise like that of our Authorized Version carried out with less knowledge handed down to posterity of the laborers, their method and order of working." [3] All we know in regard to their proceedings is limited to hints found in the works of the learned John Selden (1584–1654), and of Robert Gell, the chaplain to Archbishop Abbot, one of the revisers. The for-

[1] The two Westminster groups revised Genesis–IV Kings, and Romans–Jude; the Oxford groups Isaias–Malachias, and the Gospels, Acts, with the Apocalypse; while those at Cambridge undertook I Chronicles to Ecclesiastes, and the deutero-canonical writings. The list of their names is given by BLUNT, loc. cit., p. 28.

[2] These versions were Tyndale's, Matthew's, Coverdale's, Whitchurch's (a special edition of the Great Bible), and the Geneva Bible.

[3] Introduction to the Cambridge Paragraph Bible.

mer, in his *Table Talk*, tells us that "at the meeting of translators one read the translation (he had prepared privately), the rest holding in their hands some Bible, either of the learned tongues, or French, Spanish, Italian, etc.; if they found any fault, they spoke; if not, he read on." The latter helps us to represent to ourselves "the differences of opinion, settled by the casting vote of the 'odd man,' or by the strong, overbearing temper of a man like Bancroft, the minority comforting themselves with the thought that it was no new thing for the truth to be outvoted," and to realize "that dogmatic interests were in some cases allowed to bias the translation, and the Calvinism of one party, the prelatic views of another, were both represented at the expense of accuracy." [1]

The work of revision, formally taken in hand in 1607, occupied two years, after which began the final revision by a committee of six—two out of each group—who met in London for the purpose. They completed their task in the short space of nine months; and in 1611 the new Bible issued from the press with a title bearing the words: "Appointed to be read in the churches." It is difficult to understand why these words appear in the title-page, for there is no evidence of any decree, by either King, Privy Council, Parliament, or Convocation, ordaining its use,[2] although there is no doubt that it soon superseded the Bishops' Bible as the official version in public services. The *Dedication* to James I. is chiefly conspicuous for its servile adulation, and the *Preface to the Reader* has little more value. In this latter document we are told by the revisers that, "coming together for work, they have prayed to God for light, rendered the Hebrew and Greek texts, and worked without haste, consulting the translators or commentators, Chaldee, Hebrew, Syrian, Greek or Latin, Spanish,

[1] SMITH, Bible Dictionary, art. Version, Authorized, p. 3436 (Amer. edit., vol. iv).

[2] Yet it is from these words that the King James Version, as it is often called, has received its common name of the *Authorized* Version.

French, Italian, Dutch (i.e., Luther's version), and revising time and again their work before publishing it. . . ." They also claim credit for steering a middle course between the Puritans, who leave the old ecclesiastical words (putting *washing* for baptism, etc.), and the obscurity of the Papists, retaining foreign words of purpose to darken the sense. In reality "the earlier versions of which the revisers of 1611 made most use were those of Rheims and Geneva. Tyndale, no doubt, fixed the general tone of the version more than any other translator, through the transmission of his influence down to the Bishops' Bible, which formed the basis of the revision; but many improvements in interpretation were taken from the Geneva Bible, and not a few phrases and single words from that of Rheims." [1] Again, the rapidity with which the final revision of their work was carried out shows that they did not always *work without haste*, and this haste is thus severely but justly censured by the authors of the *Revised Version* of 1881. "When it is remembered," they say, "that this supervision was completed in nine months, we may wonder that the incongruities which remain are not more numerous." [2]

As might well be expected in a translation undertaken and carried out by such a number and variety of scholars as the Authorized Version, the various parts of the Bible are unevenly rendered. Naturally enough, the deutero-canonical books are the worst rendered of the whole Bible.

A striking and happy literary feature of the Authorized Version is the predominance of Saxon. Gibbon has about seventy, Johnson about seventy-five, Swift eighty-nine, Shakespeare about eighty-five, and the Authorized Version more than ninety Saxon words in every hundred employed. So that from this point of view the King James translation ranks very

[1] KENYON, Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts, p. 233.

[2] Preface to the Revised Version of the New Testament, p. 7. Cfr., also CONANT, History of Bible Translation, chap. xxxi, p. 259.

high. In fact the style of the Authorized Version is equally admired by friends and opponents.[1]

At the same time, the praise bestowed upon the literary beauty of the version of 1611 should not be exaggerated. Occasionally the truth of the original is sacrificed to the beauty of the English; some unseemly phrases in the Old Testament could have been easily avoided by the translators,[2] and the studied variety in its renderings, which was adopted by the authors of the King James Version, has produced a degree of inconsistency which "cannot be reconciled with the principle of faithfulness."[3] Finally, as a translation, the Authorized Version is marred by numerous errors in geography and proper names; by grammatical errors as to tenses, article, construction, etc., in the Old Testament; and in the New, by mistakes of meaning; by confusion of the aorist and perfect and other tenses; by inadequate renderings, etc.[4]

Judged from a critical standpoint, the version of 1611 is devoid of real value. The translators used no documentary sources, and were mostly restricted to a few printed editions of the *Textus Receptus* of the Old and New Testaments. Even in their changes of the renderings of the Bishops' Bible it is clear that their critical power is at times very limited, and that the improvements introduced are no proof of independent work on their part.[5]

Perhaps the most objectionable feature about the Authorized Version arises from the fact that, differently from the Douay

[1] Trench's and Father Faber's praises of the style of the Authorized Version are quoted in the unabridged "General Introduction."

[2] Cfr. Schaff, A Companion to the Greek Testament and the English Versions, p. 341 sq.

[3] Preface to the Revised Version of the New Testament (1881) (8vo edit.), p. 11. For example, the Greek verb μένειν is rendered by "to abide, remain, continue, tarry, dwell, endure, be present"; the conjunction καί is translated: "and, even, also, but, yet, then, so, when, therefore, if."

[4] For details, see Mombert, loc. cit., p. 399 sq.; and also The Revision of the New Testament, by Lightfoot, Trench, and Ellicott.

[5] Cfr. Mombert, loc. cit., pp. 391 sqq.

Bible, cases of wilful perversion of Scripture have been brought home to its Protestant authors. In his *History of the Protestant Reformation*,[1] Archbishop M. J. Spalding states as a fact that "the version of King James, on its first appearance in England, was openly decried by the Protestant ministers as abounding in gross perversions of the original text." We have already quoted Rob. Gell, the chaplain to Dr. Abbot, the Protestant Archbishop of Canterbury, who relates that "dogmatic interests were in some cases allowed to bias the translation, and the Calvinism of one party, the prelatic views of another, were both represented at the expense of accuracy." Here we shall give only one recent Protestant testimony, viz., that of Bishop Ellicott, who does not fear to say that, "in spite of the very common assumption to the contrary, there *are* many passages (in the version of 1611) from which erroneous doctrinal inferences have been drawn, but where the inference comes from the translation, and not the original."[2] In point of fact, such passages as Matt. xix, 11; I Cor. vii, 9; ix, 5; xi, 27; Heb. x, 38, etc., have justly been pointed out by Archbishop Kenrick[3] as so many dogmatic erroneous renderings, and it is only right to add that some of these have been corrected by the revisers of 1881.

**3. The Revised Version.** If one had judged of the future fortune of the Authorized Version by the manner in which it was received at first in England, he would have been naturally led to foretell its final rejection. The Bishops' Bible continued to be used in many churches, and the popularity of the Geneva translation remained intact, as is shown by the fact that no less than thirteen editions of it (in whole or in part) were issued

[1] Seventh edition, vol. i, p. 308.

[2] Considerations on the Revision of the English Version of the New Testament, p. 89; see also p. 88, where he speaks of "passages in which the error is of a doctrinal nature. . . ."

[3] Theologia Dogmatica, vol. i, p. 427 sq. (Philadelphia, 1839). Cfr. also F. W. FABER, in the Dublin Review, June, 1853, p. 466 sq.

between 1611 and 1617. Protestant ministers found fault very commonly with the renderings of the King James translation, and the best Hebraists of the day advocated a new revision of the Scriptures. In the middle of the seventeenth century, the House of Commons appointed a special committee for the study of the question. But as no report was made, and as the opposition abated with the restoration of the Stuarts, the King James Version gradually came into general use, till "with the reign of Anne (1702–1714) the tide of glowing panegyric set in."[1] Throughout the eighteenth century the schemes for revision were rare, and it is only towards the middle of the last century that something like a consensus of the English-speaking scholars of England and America was slowly formed. Foremost among the promoters of this consensus were the Anglican bishops Ellicott and Trench, whose words, at once bold and wise, went far towards reconciling the mind of many among the clergy and the laity, with the idea of the possibility, and even the necessity, of a revision.[2]

At length a new and successful step towards a revision was taken by both Houses of the Convocation of Canterbury. In February, 1870, they appointed a Committee "to report upon the desirableness of a Revision of the Authorized Version of the Old and New Testaments." Early in May that Committee presented a report, in consequence of which the following fundamental resolutions were adopted:

"(1) That it is desirable that a revision of the Holy Scriptures be undertaken; (2) that the revision be so conducted as to comprise both marginal renderings and such emendations as it may be found necessary to insert in the text of the Authorized Version; (3) that, in the above resolutions, we do not contem-

[1] PLUMPTRE, art. Version, Authorized, in SMITH, Bible Dict., Amer. edit., vol. iv, p. 3437.

[2] The words of ELLICOTT, in his Preface to his Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles, are vigorous, and even now deserve to be read (pp. viii–x). The principal reasons urged to gradually prepare a change in public opinion are given in the unabridged "General Introduction," p. 369 sq.

plate any new translation of the Bible, or any alteration of the language except where, in the judgment of the most competent scholars, such change is necessary; (4) that in such necessary changes, the style of the language employed in the existing version be closely followed; (5) that it is desirable that Convocation should nominate a body of its own members to undertake the work of revision, who shall be at liberty to invite the co-operation of any eminent for scholarship, to whatever nation or religious body they may belong."

The Committee accordingly appointed resolved that two companies should be formed for the revision of the Authorized Version of the Old Testament and the New Testament respectively; that the first should consist of four bishops and four members of the Lower House, together with eighteen scholars and divines; that the second should also consist of four bishops, four members of the Lower House, and nineteen invited scholars and divines.

Soon after these two companies had begun their work, the Committee of Convocation sought the co-operation of American scholars, in order to furnish a revision for the churches which had used so far the Authorized Version. The negotiations, begun in August, 1870, were conducted mainly through Ph. Schaff, of New York. Through his exertions, two companies of American revisers, "men of ability, experience, and reputation in Biblical learning and criticism, and fairly representing the leading churches and theological institutions of the United States,"[1] were formed before the close of 1871. After long negotiations referring to certain difficulties which stood in the way of co-operation, the American companies entered on their work on October 4, 1872.

The English and the American Committees submitted to each other portions of their work as they went along, and they issued one and the same edition, while the final variations of the American Committee were embodied in an Appendix.

[1] Ph. Schaff, The Revision of the English Version of the New Testament, Introduction, p. xvii.

After ten years and a half of work the Revised New Testament appeared on May 17, 1881, with the title of "The New Testament of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, translated out of the Greek: Being the Version set forth A.D. 1611, compared with the most ancient Authorities and Revised A.D. 1881." In their long *Preface* the Revisers give, among other things, an account of their work "under the four heads of *Text*, *Translation*, *Language*, and *Marginal Notes*."

Although the work is called a "revision," not a new translation, it is beyond doubt that, considered under those various heads, the Revised New Testament is rather a new version of the original with reference to the Authorized Version. Thus the text adopted as the basis of the new version differs so often and so considerably from the *Textus Receptus* practically followed by the translators of 1611, that it may really be called a new Greek Testament framed on documents which the critics on the Revision Committees considered as "most ancient," and as decidedly better than those which underlie the *Textus Receptus*.

As with the text, so with the *Translation* and the *Language:* the Revised Version contains alterations incomparably more numerous than had been contemplated by the rules at first laid down for the work of revision. To some extent this was the natural outcome of the larger number of textual variations adopted by the revisers. But besides alterations due to this source a very large number of others were introduced, where "faithfulness in rendering" was in no way at stake, and consequently where they could not be called necessary.[1] Finally, the *Marginal Notes* differ likewise considerably from those of the Authorized Version, both in character and in number. In general they wear a more critical appearance in the Revised

[1] This can be best realized by means of such works as The Diacritical Edition of the Holy Bible, published for the purpose of comparison between the two versions, by Rufus WENDELL. Cfr. also Ph. SCHAFF, A Companion to the Greek Testament and the English Version, p. 434 sqq.

Version; and in particular the "notes recording alternative renderings in difficult or debatable passages are numerous, and largely in excess," so the revisers tell us, "of those which were admitted by our predecessors." [1]

When we bear in mind that the sum total of the departures from the King James Version has been estimated, as regards the New Testament alone, at over 36,000,[2] it is easy to imagine something of the dismay with which the Revised New Testament was received in many quarters by men thoroughly familiar with the words and the minutest details of the Authorized Version. "Most of them," well observes Ph. SCHAFF, "had previously resisted all attempts at revision as a sort of sacrilege, and found their worst fears realized. They were amazed and shocked at the havoc made with their favorite notions and pet texts. How many sacred associations, they said, are ruthlessly disturbed! How many edifying sermons spoiled! Even the Lord's Prayer has been tampered with, and a discord thrown into the daily devotions. The inspired text is changed and unsettled, the faith of the people in God's holy Word is undermined, and aid and comfort given to the enemy of all religion." [3]

"The first and the prevailing impression," says the same critic,[4] "was one of disappointment and disapproval, especially in England. . . . Many were in hopes that the revision would supersede commentaries, and clear up all the difficulties; instead of that, they found the same obscurities, and a perplexing number of marginal notes, raising as many questions of reading or rendering. The liberals looked for more, the conservatives for fewer, departures from the old version. Some wanted the language modernized, others preferred even the antiquated

[1] *Preface* to the Revised New Testament, p. xiii.

[2] Cfr. Ph. SCHAFF, loc. cit., p. 418.

[3] SCHAFF, loc. cit., p. 413.

[4] SCHAFF, loc. cit., p. 412 sq. It should be remembered that Ph. SCHAFF was the President of the American Revision Committee.

words and phrases, including the 'whiches' and the 'devils.' A few would prefer a more literal rendering; but a much greater number of critics, including some warm friends and even members of the Committee, charge the revision with sacrificing grace and ease, poetry and rhythm, to pedantic fidelity. The same objection is made by literary critics who care more for classical English than the homely Hebraistic Greek of the Apostles and Evangelists."

In justice it must be said that the Revised New Testament is in several respects superior to the corresponding part in the Authorized Version. Textual corrections, improved renderings, suppressed inconsistencies, etc., could be mentioned in large number, so that it is not surprising to find that it has been steadily gaining ground among the scholars of the various denominations. On the other hand, it cannot be denied that in numerous cases regarding either the text [1] or the translation and language [2] the Authorized Version is decidedly better. Upon the whole, the Revised New Testament cannot lay claim to be, and it is not in fact, considered as a final translation of the original Greek, or even as a really successful revision of the King James Version.[3]

While the Revised Version of the New Testament was assailed by critics in all directions, and was declared by a very large number of them wholly unfit to displace the old version, the revision committees of England and America were pursuing the arduous task of completing their translation of the proto-canonical books of the Old Testament.[4]

[1] See in particular the work (however exaggerated in its tone) of Dean J. W. BURGON, entitled "The Revision Revised."

[2] See, especially, Washington MOON, The Revisers' English.

[3] See the admissions of Ph. SCHAFF, loc. cit., p. 416 sq.

[4] The revision of the deutero-canonical books was not initiated by convocation, but by the University Presses, which commissioned a company, formed from the Old and New Testament Companies, to carry out the work. The Revised "Apocrypha," as they are called, appeared in 1895.

Only four years later (in 1885) did they give to the public the result of their prolonged labors.

In their *Preface* to the Old Testament the revisers tell us that "as the state of knowledge on the subject of the original text is not at present such as to justify any attempt at an entire reconstruction of the text on the authority of the versions, they have thought it more prudent to adopt the Massoretic Text as the basis of their work, and to depart from it, as the authorized translators had done, only in exceptional cases." This they have really done, and in consequence, as they practically rendered the same text as the translators of 1611, the Revised Old Testament is much less altered than the New. Alterations of the Authorized Version are much more numerous in interpretation and language than in text, but it cannot be denied that in most changes—especially as regards the interpretation of the prophetical and poetical books—the revisers were particularly happy. It is only natural, therefore, to find that when the Revised Old Testament was put forth the popular verdict was more favorable to it than it had been four years previously to the Revised New Testament. "The improvements in interpretation of obscure passages were obvious, while the changes of language were less numerous; moreover, the language of the Old Testament books being less familiar than that of the Gospels, the changes in it passed with less observation."[1] On the other hand, the verdict of scholars was at first, and is still, less favorable to the revision of the Old Testament than to that of the New. It is rightly felt that in many cases the revisers did not avail themselves freely enough of all the critical work which has been going on during the last hundred years, and that they did not sufficiently take into account the numerous emendations of the Hebrew Text upon which Textual Critics are fully agreed. It seems,

[1] Frederic G. KENYON, Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts, p. 244.

therefore, that the Revised Old Testament must be regarded as "decidedly behind the scholarship of the age. The work was timid and cautious. There is little doubt that the next revision, whenever it takes place, will be bolder and freer, and that the ancient versions, especially the Septuagint, will play a larger part in the work." [1]

The foregoing remarks concerning the Revised Version apply fully to its text as issued by the University Presses of Oxford and Cambridge (England). They apply also, almost in their entirety, to the standard edition which was recently published for American readers by Thos. Nelson and Sons, New York.[2] This American edition has for its general purpose to improve, in various ways, the text of the Revised Version. It aims, in particular, at embodying in the text those readings and renderings for which the members of the American Committees had expressed their preference while at work with the English Committees of Revision, but most of which had simply been recorded in Appendices to the copies of the Revised Version issued by the University Presses.

The most obvious departures of the American edition of the New Testament from the English edition of 1881 consist in the addition of references to parallel and illustrative Biblical passages, and of running headings to indicate the contents of the pages. Other departures are connected with the division into paragraphs, the punctuation of the text, the titles of the books,[3] and the alternative title of the New Testament.[4] As regards language, the American editors have

[1] J. Paterson SMYTH, The Old Documents and the New Bible, 3d edit., p. 185. See, also, substantially the same verdict in BRIGGS, The Study of Holy Scripture, p. 216.

[2] The New Testament appeared in 1900, and the Old Testament in 1901.

[3] The titles to the Gospels run: "The Gospel according to Matthew," "The Gospel according to Mark," etc.; that to the Acts of the Apostles is simply "The Acts"; those to the Epistles of St. Paul read: "The Epistle of Paul to the Romans," "The First Epistle of Paul to the Corinthians," etc.

[4] The New Testament reads: "The New Covenant, commonly called the New Testament of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

dropped numerous archaisms or forms of expression otherwise objectionable.

The American edition of the Old Testament is likewise supplied with topical headings and references to parallel passages. Its text is practically identical, in regard to rendering, punctuation, and division into paragraphs, with that published in 1885. The titles of the books have not been interfered with, but the language of the work, in respect to the use of "shall" and "will," of the relative pronouns, of "a" instead of "an" before "h" aspirated, etc., etc., has been improved. The editors have introduced the conventional form "Jehovah" instead of the forms "LORD" and "GOD" used in the edition of 1885. They have also substituted "sheol" for "the grave," "the pit," and "hell," in places where these terms had been retained by the English Revision. These last changes will hardly commend themselves to most Protestant readers.

The American edition of the Revised Version is, upon the whole, a decided improvement on the English edition of the same. Most, however, of the textual defects of the English Revision which have been pointed out above have been allowed to subsist, and will prevent critics at large from regarding it as anything like a final translation of the Sacred Scriptures.

# PART III.

## BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS.

## SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTER XIII.

### General Principles of Biblical Interpretation.

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1. Nature of Biblical Hermeneutics.
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# PART III.

## BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICS.

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### CHAPTER XIII.

#### GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION.

§ 1. *Nature and Divisions of Biblical Hermeneutics.*

**1. Nature of Biblical Hermeneutics.** Of the four great parts of a General Introduction to the Holy Scriptures, the one which immediately prepares the student for his personal study of the sacred text is that which is usually designated under the name of *Biblical Hermeneutics*. Neither Biblical *Canonics*, which teaches him what are the books he must regard as Holy Writ, nor Biblical *Textual Criticism*, which makes him acquainted with the means available to restore the sacred text to its primitive purity, directly helps him to seize the correct meaning of the inspired records. It is different with Biblical *Hermeneutics*, whose very name, derived from the Greek ἑρμηνεύειν, to explain, bespeaks its most intimate connection with the actual interpretation of the word of God. At the present day the term *Hermeneutics*, when used in regard to the sacred text, is generally understood to mean the science of the principles according to which the Bible should be interpreted.[1]

[1] *Exegesis*, from the Greek ἐξηγεῖσθαι, to explain, is a word of identical im-

It is true that the general laws which govern the interpretation of ancient books hold good, to a very large extent, in the interpretation of the Canonical Books. Yet it cannot be denied that, owing to their Oriental and, more particularly, to their sacred character, the inspired records of the Old and New Testaments demand to be interpreted by means of special rules which make up the domain of Biblical Hermeneutics.

**2. Divisions of Biblical Hermeneutics.** Several more or less elaborate divisions of Biblical Hermeneutics have been proposed by various writers on General Introduction. In reality these writers include under the name of Biblical Hermeneutics topics which belong to other departments of Scriptural knowledge, or which do not of themselves require to be developed in order to fit the student for a personal and profitable study of the sacred text. Our treatment of Hermeneutics in the present volume will be of a far more elementary kind: after having briefly set forth the General Principles of Interpretation absolutely necessary to guide the student in understanding Holy Writ, we shall give a rapid sketch of the principal Periods in the History of Interpretation.

## § 2. *The Various Senses of Holy Writ.*

**1. The Literal Sense.** The first duty of an interpreter of Holy Writ is to inquire into the sense which the writer of a sacred book intended proximately and directly to convey through the words he used.[1] This sense, which is now commonly called the *literal* sense, is plainly the primary object of

port to *Hermeneutics*. Commonly, however, the former word denotes the commentary or interpretation of the text; while the latter applies to the science of the principles upon which Exegesis should be conducted.

[1] Cfr. Jos. DIXON, Introduction to the Sacred Scriptures, vol. i, p. 174 (Baltimore, 1853); VIGOUROUX, Manuel Biblique, no. 162; WILHELM and SCANNEL, A Manual of Catholic Theology, vol. i, p. 50; St. THOMAS Aq., Quodlib. vii, quæst. 6, art. 14.

the statements made by the writer, so that no one reading or explaining them can overlook it without running the evident risk of missing the exact meaning of the book before him, and of reading into its words his own sense instead of that of the author.

As every writer can, and in fact does, freely use terms in their primitive and in their derived acceptation to express proximately and directly his mind, so there is a twofold literal sense to be recognized in a book of Holy Writ. If the words are employed in their natural and primitive signification, the sense which they express is the *proper literal* sense; whereas, if they are used with a figurative and derived meaning, the sense, though still literal, is usually called the *metaphorical* or *figurative* sense. For example, when we read in St. John i, 6, "There was a man whose name was John," it is plain that the terms employed here are taken properly and physically, for the writer speaks of a real man whose real name was John. On the contrary, when John the Baptist, pointing out Jesus, said, "Behold the Lamb of God" (John i, 29), it is clear that he did not use the word "lamb" in that same proper literal sense which would have excluded every trope or figure, and which would have denoted some *real* lamb: what he wished proximately and directly to express, that is, the literal sense of his words, was that in the derived and figurative sense Jesus could be called "the Lamb of God." In the former case, the words are used in their proper literal sense; in the latter, in their tropical or figurative sense.

That the books of Holy Writ have a literal sense (proper or metaphorical, as just explained), that is, a meaning proximately and directly intended by the inspired writers, is a truth so clear in itself, and at the same time so universally granted, that it would be idle to insist on it here. The same holds good in regard to another question which was formerly the object of much discussion among scholars, and which may be thus

formulated: Has any passage of Holy Writ more than one literal sense? If we except a few contemporary interpreters of Holy Writ, the best known among whom is Dr. Franz SCHMID,[1] all admit that since the sacred books were composed by men, and for men, their writers naturally conformed to that most elementary law of human intercourse which requires that only one precise sense shall be proximately and directly intended by the words of the speaker or writer.[2]

**2. The Typical Sense.** Of the various meanings which Catholic interpreters have often considered as a second literal sense in some passages of Holy Writ, one claims the especial attention of the student of Biblical Hermeneutics. It is called the *spiritual* or *typical* sense, and is well described by St. Thomas in the following words: "The author of the Sacred Scripture is God, in whose power it is not only to accommodate words to signify things, but also to make *the things themselves* significative. That first signification, therefore, by which the words signify things, belongs to the first (or primary) sense, which is historical or literal. But that signification by which the things signified by the words signify yet other things is called the spiritual sense, which is founded upon, and supposes, the literal sense."[3] Thus the history of Isaac and Ismael, which is related in the book of Genesis, had, beside the literal sense intended by the writer of that book, another, viz., a spiritual sense, which is made known to us in the Epistle to the Galatians, and according to which the facts recorded of Isaac and Ismael foreshadowed both Testaments.[4]

The spiritual sense may therefore be defined as that sense

[1] De Inspirationis Bibliorum vi et Ratione, Brixinæ, 1885, p. 246 sqq.

[2] For details, see CORNELY, Introductio Generalis, p. 522 sqq.; TROCHON, Introduction Générale, p. 508 sqq.; CHAUVIN, Leçons d'Introduction Générale, p. 456 sqq.; C. H. TOY, Quotations in the New Testament; and commentators generally.

[3] Summa Theol., pars i, quæst. i, art. x. The spiritual sense is also called *mystical*, because less obvious, more hidden, than the literal sense.

[4] Gal. iv, 24.

which the Holy Spirit intends to convey through the things, persons, events, etc., to which the words have a direct reference. These things, persons, or events were so ordained by God as to foreshadow others, and, on that account, they can signify to us God's thoughts or purposes. They are called *types*,[1] and the name of *typical sense* is naturally given to the sense which is conveyed to us through them.

Usually the typical sense is divided into *allegorical*, *tropological*, and *anagogical*, according to the three great classes of objects foreshadowed in Holy Writ.

(1) The *allegorical* or *prophetic* sense is given by the types which refer to Christ and His Church, and the principal of which are either persons like Adam, Melchisedech, etc., or things, such as the ark, the brazen serpent, etc., or, finally, events, such as the dismissal of Agar and her child, etc. (2) The *tropological* or *moral* sense is derived from types which convey a lesson for our moral guidance. Thus the direction given to Israel in Deuteronomy (xxv, 4): "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out thy corn," teaches, in the tropological sense pointed out by St. Paul (I Cor. ix, 9), the obligation under which Christians are to provide for the maintenance of the ministers of the Gospel. (3) The *anagogical* sense is suggested by objects which typify the things of the world to come. In that sense, Jerusalem, the capital city of Judæa, is the figure of the heavenly Jerusalem (Apoc. xxi, 2), and the Temple of Solomon, the ancient tabernacle, and the Mosaic rites are but "the symbol and shadow of heavenly things" (Heb. viii, 5).

It will be noticed that these examples of the various typical senses are at the same time clear proofs that the writers of the New Testament admitted the existence of a typical sense in the various books of the Old Testament. Their belief was in full harmony with the mind of their Jewish contemporaries,

[1] Cfr. Rom. v, 14; I Cor. x, 6, 11. The name of *antitypes* is given to the things, persons, or events thus foreshadowed.

both in Palestine and in Alexandria,—as we see from various places of the Gospels and from the writings of Josephus and Philo,[1]—and it has been shared in by the Fathers of the Church from the beginning and by Catholic theologians and interpreters generally down to the present day. In fact the illustrious Origen and the Alexandrian school of Biblical Interpretation have seen types everywhere in the Old Testament, and although their view is an exaggerated one, it goes far towards showing how naturally the typical sense of Holy Writ is suggested by the general conception that the Old Testament dispensation was, even in its details, preordained to dispose men for the advent of Christianity.

Much more acceptable than this opinion of Origen is the view entertained by some Catholic authors that the existence of a typical sense should be admitted in connection with the persons and events spoken of in the writings of the New Testament.[2]

It is clear that whoever admits the existence of a typical sense truly intended by God, as stated in the definition of it given above, must also admit its proving force wherever its existence is fully ascertained. In point of fact, the sacred writers of the New Testament appeal repeatedly to the mystical sense of passages of the Old Testament, in exactly the same manner as they appeal to the literal meaning of others. As, however, Rationalists and Protestants generally deny the existence of such sense in the Holy Scriptures, it would avail nothing to draw an argument from the mystical sense against them. Besides, Catholic theologians think with St. Thomas, that one may all the more dispense with having recourse to

[1] CHAUVIN, Leçons d'Introduction Générale, p. 469.

[2] Cfr I Cor. x, 16, 17, where we are told that the Eucharistic bread and wine are a figure of the mutual union of the faithful. In like manner, according to many Fathers, Martha and Mary typify the active and the contemplative life, respectively; again, the bark of Peter on the stormy sea is a striking image of the Church under persecution, etc.

the typical sense of the sacred books, because "this sense never conveys a truth necessary for our faith that is not found stated in a literal manner somewhere in Holy Writ."

**3. The Accommodative Sense.** It is not always easy to distinguish between the typical and another sense, which is called *accommodative*, because it consists in the *accommodation* or application of the Scripture to something of which there is no question in the passage quoted, either in the literal or in the mystical sense. This accommodation or adaptation of the sacred words to an object to which they have no real reference may be made in two ways. One by extending their meaning to some matter like to that of which they really speak; as, for instance, if one would excuse his fault by saying in the words of Eve, "Serpens decepit me";[1] the other way is by applying the words of a passage to some subject quite foreign and unlike to that which is spoken of in Holy Writ; as, for instance, if any one quoted the words of Ps. xvii, 26, "Cum sancto sanctus eris," intending thereby to point out the beneficial effects of good company for a man, whereas in the text there is question of something entirely different, viz., of God showing Himself kind and merciful to the kind and merciful man.

Most of the time it is easy enough to distinguish this latter form of accommodation from the typical sense, but the case is oftentimes different in connection with the former way of adapting the words of the inspired records. A clear proof of this is found in the fact that the best interpreters of Holy Writ are at variance when there is question of determining the places where the New Testament writers quote the Scriptures of the Old Testament in an accommodative sense. Thus, while most Catholic commentators consider as taken at least in their typical sense the words of the Old Testament which

[1] Gen. iii, 13.

are quoted in the New with some such introductory formula as "ut adimpleretur quod dictum est . . . ," some of our very best interpreters have maintained that passages quoted in this manner may be [1] and in fact are at times applied by the Evangelists *per accommodationem*.[2] Of course, the same difficulty does not exist in connection with places where these introductory formulas are not used by the sacred writers. In such places most Catholic interpreters admit readily that passages from the Old Testament are quoted in the New in an accommodative sense.

Treading in the footsteps of the New Testament writers, the Fathers and Doctors of the Church have had frequent recourse to this accommodative sense in their expositions of the sacred text, and it is well known that the Church herself does the same in her liturgy. It is therefore allowable to the preacher of the Gospel to use it also in his sermons and instructions; provided, however, he be careful not to give it out as the real meaning of Holy Writ, or as a valid proof of Catholic doctrine. Far-fetched and disrespectful accommodations of the Word of God should of course be avoided. Finally, there is no doubt that when employed with tact and genuine piety the accommodative sense may prove highly useful and edifying.

**4. The Mythical Sense.** Lastly, another sense ascribed to Holy Writ, especially by Rationalistic scholars, is the *mythical* sense, thus called from the non-historical character of the facts under which certain ideas and truths are supposed to be taught to the reader. In the myth, as in the parable, the object of

[1] See the valuable remarks of Card. WISEMAN on this point in his Tenth Lecture on the Connection between Science and Revealed Religion.

[2] Thus MALDONATUS, S.J., in connection with Matt. viii, 17, says: "Quod a propheta (Isaia) de peccatis dictum erat, Evangelista ad morbos corporis accommodat . . . quia ita solet Matthæus prophetias non ad eumdem, sed ad similem sensum accommodare"; and in connection with Matt. iv, 14 sq., he writes: "suo more ad Christum accommodat (Evangelista), ut alias." Cfr. also MALDONATUS in Matt. ii, 18, 23; xiii, 35, etc. See also SCHANZ, Comm. über Matthæus, quoted in The Dublin Review, April, 1895, p. 330.

the writer, that which he intends to convey, is not necessarily the occurrence of a real fact, still less the correctness of the details he relates, but simply the idea or truth, historical, moral, religious, or otherwise, which he makes obvious to his reader by means of an apparently historical narrative. Those who, for instance, consider as mythical the account of man's temptation and fall regard as non-historical the details which are given of the serpent's cunning speech to the woman, of the eating of an apple as the actual occurrence which constituted man's first sin, etc., and take them simply to be a peculiar way of setting forth the great religious truth that the first ancestors of mankind once fell away from their primitive innocence through wilful disobedience to their Maker. In order, therefore, to obtain the mythical sense of a writer, one must first disregard the peculiar dress, suited to the notions of the writer's time and country, under which he conveyed his thought; and, secondly, grasp the idea or truth, moral, philosophical, religious, or even the historical fact which the writer directly intended to teach or record.

The mythical interpretation of a comparatively few passages of Holy Writ has apparently found some favor in the eyes of such recent Catholic writers as François Lenormant, E. Babelon, Father Chas. Robert, and even Card. Meignan, who, after his long and careful study of the books of the Old Testament, seems not to maintain the strictly historical character of the first chapters of Genesis in the following passage:[1] "One should not look in the first chapters of Genesis so much for the strict history of the world and of mankind as for a religious and philosophical account of that same history. Indeed, we do not hereby exclude from these chapters recollections of historical facts handed down by tradition; but, in relating them, the inspired writer has not aimed at absolute precision;

[1] This passage is extracted from an article by the learned Cardinal, entitled L'Eden, and published in Le Correspondant, Feb. 1895.

he chiefly intended to set forth the moral teaching which they convey."

Views of similar import had also been maintained long ago by such able scholars as Dom CALMET († 1757),[1] and J. JAHN († 1817),[2] but these views were, and still are, almost universally rejected by Catholic interpreters.

### § 3. *Principal Rules of Interpretation.*

**1. General Rules of Interpretation.** The first general principle which the interpreter of Holy Writ should realize and act upon is *to follow the ordinary laws of human language.* This first rule has for its ground the very purpose which God had in view when He employed human agents and human language for the composition of the sacred books. In thus acting He clearly wished to adapt His revelation to our modes of thought and of expression, so that the Biblical interpreter should ever consider the language used by the inspired writers as submitted to the ordinary laws of human language.[3]

A second law of interpretation which is no less general in its application, and which is certainly of more practical import than the one just given, prescribes *ready conformity to the decisions and even to the common sentiment of the Church.* Whoever believes sincerely that the Church of God is "the pillar and ground of the truth" [4] will feel no repugnance at any time to submit to the decisions of that same Church regarding the meaning of the Holy Scriptures.

Very willingly, too, will he comply with the most wise rule of interpretation which the same Church of God first framed

[1] See CALMET'S Commentaire Littéral sur l'Epître de St. Jude, verse 7, p. 350 (Paris, 1726).

[2] Introduction to the Old Testament, p. 242 sqq. (Engl. Transl.). Cfr. also Bishop HANNEBERG, Histoire de la Révélation Biblique, vol. i, p. 239 (Paris, 1850).

[3] In this connection, see the passages of St. Augustine and St. Hilary of Poitiers quoted in unabridged edition of "General Introduction."

[4] I Tim. iii, 15.

in the Council of Trent, and which it solemnly repeated in the Council of the Vatican, viz., that in matters of faith and morals the Catholic interpreter shall carefully abstain from ascribing to a passage a meaning which would be opposed to the common sentiment of the Church, because the Church has authority for judging of the true meaning of Holy Writ.

Together with the obligation just referred to, and incumbent on every Catholic interpreter to abide by the decisions and the common sentiment of the Church, the Fathers of Trent and of the Vatican enacted another rule, which may be considered as the third general principle of interpretation, although it apparently does little more than point out one of the practical ways in which the foregoing rule should be carried out. According to these two Ecumenical Councils, the Catholic interpreter is strictly bound, in his interpretation of the sacred text, *not to go against the unanimous consent of the Fathers of the Church* in matters which appertain to Catholic belief and practice. Evidently whoever would not comply with the duty thus laid on him could not be said to interpret Holy Writ in the sense admitted by the Church of God, since she has endorsed once for all the sense which has commended itself to the minds of her great leaders in the early ages, of all her authorized exponents of true faith and pure morality. On the other hand, in framing this general rule, the Fathers of Trent and of the Vatican never intended to bind us to accept blindly the various senses which the very best commentators of past ages have proposed regarding even dogmatic or moral passages; a good proof of it is found in the fact that it is the *unanimous consent of the Fathers of the Church* that is declared to be an authority by which it shall be our duty to abide.

The last general rule of interpretation to be mentioned here is *to take as a guide the analogy of faith*, in passages whose sense is not expressly determined either by the au-

thority of the Church or by that of the Fathers. This rule is well set forth by DIXON[1] in the following terms: "By *analogy* in general is meant a certain likeness and agreement. By the analogy of faith is meant the agreement which subsists between all the parts of the Christian doctrine; in other words, between all the parts of the deposit of faith. . . . We must, therefore, when engaged in the interpretation of Scripture, always remember that there is a body of doctrine taught by the Church, part of which she derives from the written, and part from the unwritten, Word; and that we must take care that with this body of doctrine no interpretation given by us to Scripture shall be ever found to clash. . . . In reality, from the earliest days of the Christian Church the liberty of the interpreter of Scripture was limited in this way. For no part of the New Testament (and this can be easily shown in the introduction to each of the books of it) was written with the view that infidels should learn the Christian faith by reading it; but all the parts or books of it were written in order that those who had already received the faith might be more fully instructed and confirmed in the faith, and induced to regulate their lives in accordance with their faith. Such being the case, the faithful to whom these writings were first committed must have been careful not to take any meaning from them which would be at variance with the doctrine that they had been taught already."

Guided, therefore, by the *analogy of faith*, the Christian interpreter will refrain from taking strictly the words of many passages, because, if so taken, they would yield a meaning inconsistent with the ascertained data of Catholic doctrine. He will not, for instance, interpret as recommending suicide these words of the book of Proverbs: "Put a knife to thy throat"; nor will he look upon the following passage of the

[1] A General Introduction to the Holy Scriptures, vol. i, p. 198 sq. (Baltimore, 1853).

Epistle to the Romans: "Whom God will, He endureth," as expressing the erroneous doctrine that the Almighty arbitrarily and by a positive act of His power hardens the heart of obdurate sinners.

**2. Special Rules of Interpretation Regarding the Literal and the Typical Sense.** Besides the general principles of interpretation which have been thus far exposed, there are a few other rules which, though less general in their character, should be well known and distinctly kept in mind by the student who undertakes to explain any book of the Bible. Some of these refer to the *literal* sense, that is, to the sense which the sacred writer intended to convey when he used his words either in a proper or in a metaphorical acceptation. The first rule in this connection is to ascertain by every available means, such as familiarity with Hebrew and Greek, extensive use of the ancient versions, knowledge of comparative philology, reference to parallel passages, etc., the various meanings, proper or metaphorical, in which the words may have been employed by the inspired writers. Next comes the duty to determine whether the words in a given passage should be taken in their proper or, on the contrary, in their metaphorical acceptation. For this purpose two general rules should be borne in mind: (1) the words of Holy Writ must be taken in their proper sense, unless it be necessary to have recourse to their metaphorical meaning, and this becomes necessary only when the proper acceptation would yield a sense evidently incorrect or manifestly opposed to the authority of tradition or to the decisions of the Church, as already explained; (2) the words of Scripture can be taken in their metaphorical sense only in so far as this agrees both with the usage of the time at which the writer lived and with the laws of the language he employed. For an author writing at a given period of history, and in a special

language, naturally conforms to the genius of that language and uses words or sentences in precisely the same figurative sense as the one attached to them by his contemporaries. Finally, after the interpreter has decided in which general manner—properly or metaphorically—the words in question should be taken, he must endeavor to determine which of the many precise meanings, either proper or metaphorical, has been directly and immediately intended by the writer. With a view to this he must pay special attention to (1) the syntax and idioms of the original languages, and particularly of the Hebrew; (2) the subject-matter, that is, the topic of which the author is treating, and which oftentimes shows the sense which he attaches to a particular word or expression; (3) the context, i.e., the connection of one sentence with the preceding and with the subsequent parts of the same chapter: for it is beyond doubt that a meaning which is contrary to the context should be rejected, since it cannot be the true sense of the passage; (4) the scope or design which the author had in view, and in the unfolding of which he naturally made use of such words and phrases as were well suited to his purpose. Both the general and the special scopes, however, should be ascertained, so as to make it sure which precise meaning is best in harmony with them; (5) the historical circumstances of time, place, etc., in the midst of which the author wrote: for in writing he used the words in the sense received by his contemporaries, supposed as known to them a certain number of customs, facts, etc., and consequently alluded to them in a manner which is now intelligible only to those well acquainted with the same historical circumstances; (6) the parallel passages, i.e., such as have some degree of resemblance in style, representation, etc., inasmuch as they naturally exhibit coincidences of sentiment and expression, etc., which will enable us to catch the meaning of those that are obscure by means of those that

are less so; (7) the poetical parallelism, either synonymous or antithetic, which is one of the best means to discover the genuine sense of an expression in the poetical books of the Bible; (8) the renderings which have been adopted by the ancient versions or by the best commentators of Holy Writ.

The principal rules not to be lost sight of in connection with the *typical* sense are: (1) not to be preoccupied by the idea of finding everywhere a typical sense; (2) to recognize a typical sense only in passages where Holy Scripture or tradition have admitted one, or where the resemblance between the type and the antitype is true and striking; (3) not to consider the typical sense as a valid argument in matters of faith or morals, unless it be theologically certain.

## SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTER XIV.

### Principal Periods in the History of Biblical Interpretation.

**I. The Jewish Interpretation (to First Century A.D.).**

1. Esdras and the Early Scribes.
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# CHAPTER XIV.

## PRINCIPAL PERIODS IN THE HISTORY OF BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION.

### § 1. *The Jewish Interpretation (to First Century A.D.).*

**1. Esdras and the Early Scribes.** The history of early Biblical Interpretations among the Jews is shrouded in no less obscurity than the gradual formation of their sacred literature itself. The founding of their first rabbinical schools of exegesis is usually referred to Esdras, who is called in Holy Writ "the Scribe," "a ready Scribe in the Law," and who "had prepared his heart to seek the Law of Yahweh, and to do and to teach in Israel the commandments and judgments." [1] And there is no doubt that Esdras' aim to make his fellow Jews comply perfectly with all the regulations of the law became the one aim of the scribes and rabbis who came after him. Far from being satisfied with simply interpreting into Aramaic the passages of the *Torah* which had just been read in Hebrew in the public services of the synagogues, the early scribes entered into developments whose object was to show how the Mosaic precepts could apply to every minute detail of life. "The wisdom of the scribes," says, rightly, W. R. Smith,[2] "consisted of two parts, which in Jewish terminology were respectively called Halacha and Haggada. Halacha was legal teaching, systematized legal precept, while Haggada was doctrinal and practical admonition, mingled with parable and legend. But of these two parts, the Halacha—that is, the system of rules applying the Pentateuchal law to every case of practice and every detail of life—was always the chief thing."

It is not surprising that the early scribes should have endeav-

[1] Esdras, vii, 6, 10–12.

[2] The Old Testament in the Jewish Church, Lect. iii, p. 44 sq. (2d Edition, 1892).

ored to evolve from the written law of Moses Halachic rules that would apply to all the cases of the private, domestic, and public life of Israel. Still less surprising is it to find that, despite their natural desire to interpret a scriptural law or passage in its immediate literal sense, they were often betrayed into a more or less artificial explanation of the text before them to meet the ever-varying exigencies of time and place.

The most eminent among the early scribes were Antigonus of Socho, a disciple of Simon the Just (fourth century B.C.); Joseph ben Johanan, who belonged to the epoch of the Machabean wars of independence; Nathan of Arbela, who lived under John Hyrcaus; Abtalion, a contemporary of Hyrcanus II.; Hillel and Shammai, contemporaries of Herod the Great. It is to Hillel († 10 A.D.) that Jewish tradition ascribes the first framing of the rules to be observed in the interpretation of the law. He reduced them to seven principles which have been called a kind of "rabbinical logic"; but they were enlarged later on to thirteen by Rabbi Ismael (second century A.D.).

**2. The Allegorical School of Alexandria: Philo.** While the leaders of the Aramaic-speaking Jews were led to strain, or even overstrain,[1] the text of the Law, in their desire to give Mosaic support to their entire oral law, those of the Greek-speaking Jews went farther still in their distortion of the Pentateuch, through their apologetic preoccupation. The Hellenists, or Greek-speaking Jews, having come, and living, in contact with Hellenic thought and religion, were gradually led, for apologetical purposes, to prove that the exalted moral and religious views of the Greek philosophers, and particularly of Plato, were ultimately traceable to the divine Revelation contained in the sacred books of the Jews. All the wisdom of the Greeks, it was contended, had been borrowed, in a distant past, from the books of Moses rendered into Greek long before the work of the Septuagint;[2] and in consequence it was assumed that it could be shown how all the best sayings of the pagan philosophers had been taken from the writings of the Jewish lawgiver. In their efforts thus to extract Greek philosophy from the Pentateuch,

[1] Cfr. Matt. xv, 2, 3, 6; etc.

[2] We refer to the fiction of Aristobulus, which asserted the existence of a previous and much older translation of the Law (cfr. VIGOUROUX, Dictionnaire de la Bible, art. Alexandrie (Ecole d'), p. 360; FARRAR, History of Interpretation, p. 129 sq.).

the Hellenistic apologists started what has been called the *allegorical* method of interpretation. Their first great leader was apparently the philosopher Aristobulus, a Jewish writer, who lived in Alexandria under Ptolemy VI. (181–146 B.C.), and who seems to have confined allegory within reasonable limits, so that he cannot be held responsible for the extravagances of those scholars who after him made up the school of Alexandria.

However this may be, the man whose name has become most intimately connected with the allegorical Jewish school of Alexandria is unquestionably Philo, a contemporary of Our Lord (he died about 50 A.D.). He it was who formulated the rules of allegorical interpretation. He it was, also, who applied them with consistency in his various writings. He it was, finally, whose influence is especially recognizable upon the allegorical writers of the Christian school of Alexandria of whom it will be soon question.

According to him, "there are three rules to determine when the literal sense is excluded: (1) When anything is said unworthy of God; (2) when it presents an insoluble difficulty; (3) when the expression is allegorical." [1]

To these general principles Philo added twenty-three rules of the allegorical method, which Dr. Briggs [2] arranges happily under the four heads of (1) *Grammatical Allegory;* (2) *Rhetorical Allegory;* (3) *Allegory by means of new combinations* (a method fully wrought out by the Kabalists at a later date); (4) *Symbolism*, which is of three kinds: of numbers, of things, and of names.

One is truly surprised when he realizes the extent to which this Alexandrian philosopher, who held the most rigid views of inspiration, did not hesitate to carry his allegorical method of interpretation. Men, things, historical facts, legal enactments, most important events, minute details, all things, in a word, may be taken as allegorical, as symbolizing now one thing and now another altogether different. Thus, the four rivers in the earthly Paradise are, according to him, the four cardinal virtues; the five cities of the Plain are the five senses. In the simple and straightforward passage about the land of promise, "cities" he takes to mean "general virtues"; "houses," "special virtues"; "wells," "noble dispositions towards wisdom"; "vine-

[1] Briggs, Introduction to the Study of Holy Scripture, p. 434 sq.
[2] Ibid., p. 435.

yards and olive-trees" imply "cheerfulness and light," the fruits of a contemplative life. Again, Moses is intelligence; Aaron is speech; Enoch is repentance; Noe is righteousness; Abraham is virtue acquired by learning; Isaac is innate virtue; Lot is sensuality; Ismael is sophistry, etc., etc. As an example of the manifold meaning in which Philo takes the same object, we may give here "the sun" which in one case is the understanding; in another, the bodily sense; in another again, the Word of God; and in another, finally, God Himself.

And yet, strange to say, the hidden sense attained only by allegory is for Philo and his school the real sense intended by God. It is the sense designed, indeed, not for the uncultivated, who are incapable of apprehending the divine wisdom, but for those who have raised themselves to a pure spiritual view of the Deity.

**3. The Jewish Interpretation and the New Testament Writings.** Whoever will examine closely the manner in which Our Lord is reported in the Gospels as quoting the Scriptures of the Old Testament will be led to the following conclusions regarding the extent to which He adopted the Jewish methods of interpretation prevalent in His time. Besides the *literal* interpretation of the sacred text which He uses like His contemporaries, Jesus shows Himself perfectly acquainted with the legal or Halacha method of interpretation so prevalent among the Pharisees and scribes of His time, and He usually defeats these rabbinical opponents of His with their own weapons. Thus, His line of argument in St. John x, 34–36, is an application of Hillel's first rule of interpretation, viz., the inference from the greater to the less.[1] Again, in His discussion concerning the Sabbath law, as reported by St. Matthew (xii, 4–8), He seems to apply another rabbinical principle of the time (the sixth rule of Hillel), in virtue of which Scriptural passages could be used to supplement one another. But while Jesus thus employs the Halacha method as best suited in controversy with His rabbinical adversaries, His favorite method of teaching the people is essentially the Haggada, or homiletical interpretation, which admits of parabolic and familiar exposition. Our Lord's use of parables to illustrate or suggest moral or religious truths is

[1] The seven rules of rabbinical interpretation formulated by Hillel have already been referred to. They are given in MIELZINER, Introduction to the Talmud, p. 123 sq.

too well known to require more than a passing mention here, though it is the most convincing proof of the fact that He freely adopted the Haggadic method of exposition in use among the Palestinian rabbis of His time.

Is it possible to go farther and to admit with some contemporary scholars that Our Lord, besides adopting the general methods of the Palestinian rabbis, came into connection with the *allegorical* method of the Alexandrian Jews, and argued from the text with something of Hellenistic freedom? In answer to this question it may be said that, at times, Jesus seems almost to use the methods of the Hellenists; as, for instance, when He applies to Himself, in what some take to be an accommodative sense, the prophecy of Isaias lxi, 1 sq.;[1] Ps. viii, 3;[2] and possibly Ps. cxvii, 22–23.[3] Even in these passages, however, it remains possible to admit that, instead of the accommodative sense, Our Lord simply applied to Himself the higher typical sense ever intended by the Holy Spirit, as He does unquestionably in other places.

A last and most important point to be noticed in connection with Our Saviour's method of interpreting Holy Writ regards some features which are peculiarly His own. Differently from all His contemporaries, He delivered doctrines on His own authority for settling questions; as, for example, in His answer to the Sadducees recorded in St. Matt. xxii, 30. He even went farther and contrasted His own interpretation of the fundamental laws of the Decalogue with the traditional interpretation, as may be seen in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. vi, 21 sqq.).

As might well be anticipated, the New Testament writers used the text of the Old Testament in about the same manner as their Jewish or Hellenistic contemporaries in order to draw therefrom arguments that might be considered as valid in the eyes of the Palestinian or Hellenistic Jews. Moreover, by so doing they simply adopted the same exegetical methods as their Master had Himself used during His mortal life.

The following scheme contains references to the principal passages of the New Testament where the inspired writers have been considered to incline towards the *Haggada*, the *Halacha*, and the *Allegory* methods of interpretation, respectively:

[1] Cfr. Luke iv, 16–22. [2] Matt. xxi, 16. (Cfr. MALDONATUS, in loc.)
[3] Matt xxi, 42–44.

| Haggada. | Halacha. | Allegory. |
|---|---|---|
| Matt. iii, 13–18.[1] | Rom. iv, 3. | Galat. iv, 24 sq. |
| James ii, 21 sq.; v, 11–17. | I Cor. ix, 9. | I Cor. x, 4. |
| Rom. x, 15.[2] | II Cor. iii, 7.[3] | Heb. vii. |
| Heb. xi. | Jas. ii, 8–13. | Apoc. xiii, 18; xii, 1 sq.; xvi, 12; xvi, 16, etc. |

## § 2. *The Christian Interpretation before the Protestant Reformation.*

**1. The First Three Centuries.** The early Fathers of the Church trod, in several ways, in the footsteps of the first preachers of Christianity as regards their treatment of Holy Writ. Like the Apostles and the New Testament writers, they did not aim at anything like a continuous or systematic exposition of the Holy Scriptures, and only occasionally did they quote the sacred text in their epistles or other extant works. Again, from their few quotations from, or allusions to, Holy Writ we may infer that, like their predecessors, the Apostolic Fathers adopted the manner of understanding the Sacred Scriptures that was prevalent in their time and among those to whom they wrote.

Thus, as St. Clement of Rome destined his letter to the faithful of Corinth, who were mostly Hellenistic converts, he naturally used, besides the literal sense of Holy Writ, what seems to be the *allegorical* method of exposition. Again, since the one purpose of the letter ascribed to St. Barnabas is to find throughout the Old Testament something which, in some way or other, he may refer to Christ or to Christianity; and, accordingly, he interprets in the strangest manner, in a thoroughly Philonian fashion, the most natural details of Jewish history.[4]

Philo's influence is also unmistakable in connection with the first Christian apologist, St. Justin. Starting from a ground common to him and to his opponents, viz., that the Old Testament writers spoke in mysteries, types, and symbols, this illustrious Father of the Church arrives sometimes at strange explanations of the sacred text through his application of the allegorical method. This happens both in his *Second Apology* and his *Dialogue with Trypho*. In fact, in this latter work, as

[1] Cfr. Maldonatus, in loc.

[2] Cfr. Van Steenkiste, in Sti. Pauli Epistolas, vol. i, p. 162.

[3] Cfr. Van Steenkiste, ibid., p. 302.

[4] For examples, see unabridged "General Introduction," p. 427 sq.

St. Justin is constantly giving strained meanings to the Scriptural passages he appeals to (as, for example, when he states that the wrestling of Jacob with the angel denotes the temptation of Jesus; his double marriage with Lia and Rachel, the revelation of God in the Jewish and the Christian Church, and the miracle of Eliseus wrought by causing the iron to swim, deliverance from the burden of sin by baptism, etc., etc.), his Jewish adversary cannot help complaining that while God's words are sacred, Justin's exegesis of them is purely artificial.[1]

Happily for Christian apologetics and hermeneutics, principles of interpretation sounder than those of St. Justin, because less under the influence of Alexandrian allegorism, were set forth by the holy bishop of Lyons, St. Irenæus. Although that illustrious Father deviates at times in practice from the wise rules he had framed, yet, like the author of the *Clementine Recognitions*, he belongs to the class of *Historico-theological* expounders who follow sound and correct principles of hermeneutics. But the case stands differently with two other apologetical writers of the second century, St. Athenagoras, and St. Theophilus of Antioch, who freely indulged in allegorical and fanciful explanations of Holy Writ. The case stands differently more particularly with CLEMENT and ORIGEN, the two most illustrious teachers of the Christian exegetical school of Alexandria. Like St. Irenæus, Clement of Alexandria recognizes indeed in theory the existence of the literal, historical sense, and proclaims the great principle of an ecclesiastical tradition as the supreme test of exegesis.[2] But in practice his unbounded admiration for Philo betrays him, far more than Irenæus or any of his predecessors, into fanciful allegorical interpretations. Thus, for example, he expounds the Decalogue in the following manner: "The writing of God and His formation of figures on the tablet is the creation of the world. The Decalogue, by a

[1] According to him, the "*rule of truth*," or doctrinal tradition handed down in the churches founded by the Apostles, and more particularly "the tradition of the greatest and most ancient Church, known to all, founded and established by two most glorious Apostles, Peter and Paul, at Rome, . . . with which Church, on account of its pre-eminence, it is necessary that every church should agree," is the great principle of Christian interpretation. (Against Haer., Book i, chap. i; Book iii, chaps. iii, iv.)

[2] For quotations from Clement's writings regarding tradition, cfr. SCHANZ, A Christian Apology, vol. iii, p. 373. See, also, DAVIDSON, On Sacred Hermeneutics, pp. 81–83.

heavenly image, contains the sun, moon, stars, clouds, lights, wind, water, air, darkness, fire. This is the natural or physical decalogue of heaven. The image of the earth contains men, cattle, reptiles, beasts, and of aquatic tribes, fishes and whales; and again of birds such as are carnivorous, and such as feed on the fruits of the earth; and of plants, in like manner, both those that bear fruit and those which are barren. This is the natural decalogue of the earth." [1] Again, explaining the account of the erection of the tabernacle, and of the making of its furniture (Exod. xxv, xxvi), he says: "The candlestick situated south of the altar of incense signified the movements of the seven stars making circuits southward. From each side of the candlestick projected three branches with lights in them, because the sun placed in the midst of the other planets gives light both to those above and under him by a kind of divine music." [2]

Like Irenæus and Clement, Origen proclaims, it is true, the principle of an ecclesiastical tradition as the supreme test of interpretation,[3] and distinguishes several senses of Holy Writ. But, more even than Clement, his master, he is ready to set forth allegorical explanations. Nay, more: he endeavors to justify his extreme allegorism by showing the utter impossibility for the Biblical interpreter to take in their literal sense passages which, if understood in this manner, would ascribe to God mere human form and feelings, or contain something inherently absurd (such as the prohibition to eat vultures), or convey unworthy or unjust precepts (as, for instance, the threat that the uncircumcised man-child should be destroyed out of his people), or imply historical contradictions, etc. As further proofs of his position, he appeals to St. Paul's statement that 'the letter killeth, but the spirit quickeneth," [4] and to the incidental use by the same Apostle of the passage of the Red Sea by the Israelites as an analogy of Christian baptism,[5] and of the story of Agar and Sara as signifying "by an allegory" the two Testaments.[6] It is not, therefore, surprising to find that, having

[1] Miscellanies, Book vi, chap. xvi.
[2] Miscellanies, Book v, chap. vi.
[3] Cfr., for instance, Origen's words in his Preface to the περὶ ἀρχῶν.
[4] II Cor. iii, 6.
[5] I Cor. x, 1 sq.
[6] Galat. iv, 21 sqq.

thus shown, to his own satisfaction, the lawfulness, nay, even the necessity, of an allegorical exposition, Origen should very often disregard in practice the literal and the moral senses of Holy Writ which he had recognized in theory.

A few brief specimens of Origen's extreme allegorism will suffice here. The fact that Rebecca came to draw water at the well and there met the servant of Abraham (Gen. xxiv, 15 sq.) he takes to mean that we must "daily come to the wells of Scripture" in order to meet with Christ. In Gen. xviii, 2, the Septuagint says wrongly that the three men seen by Abraham stood *above* him. Origen interprets this as meaning that Abraham submitted himself to the will of God. In connection with St. Matt. (xix, 3 sqq.), where there is question of divorce, the same scholar enters upon a long digression about the marriage of the soul with its guardian angel. The words of Christ's forerunner in St. Matt. (iii, 11) and St. John (i, 27), that he is not worthy "to bear" or "to loose" the shoes of the coming Messias, Origen refers to Our Lord's incarnation and descent into Hades, etc.

**2. From the Fourth to the Sixth Century.** While the influence of Origen continued to be felt powerfully in Alexandria, another Greek school of Biblical interpretation sprang up in Antioch of Syria. The exegetical method of the new school stood in great contrast with that pursued by the Scriptural scholars of Alexandria. Looking upon the literal sense as the meaning directly and primarily intended by God, the school of Antioch maintained that this sense was the one it imported most to determine, and that for obtaining it every available means, such as grammar, history, etc., should be used. It wisely rejected every arbitrary construction of the sacred text, and all the allegorical explanations for which no sound basis could be pointed out. Whence it appears that the leading principles of this exegetical school were truly those of sober and sound hermeneutics, and this is why they are still adhered to by our contemporary exegetical writers.

The chief representatives of the Antiochian school are: (1) Diodorus of Tarsus († ab. 390); (2) Theodore of Mopsuestia († 429) and St. John Chrysostom († 407), the two great disciples of Diodorus; (3) Polychronius, Bishop of Apamæa († 430); (4) St. Isidore of Pelusium († ab. 450), a disciple of St. Chry-

sostom; and finally (5) Theodoret, Bishop of Cyrus († ab. 458).

Side by side with the Greek-speaking section of the Syrian Church, whose great exegetical school was founded in Antioch, there was the hardly less important Syriac-speaking section of the same Church, having Edessa for its great Biblical centre, and Aphraates and St. Ephrem for its leading interpreters.

"The great Cappadocian triumvirate," St. Basil the Great († 379), St. Gregory Nazianzen († ab. 389), and St. Gregory of Nyssa († 396), is usually designated under the name of the school of Cæsarea in Cappadocia, although these Greek Fathers did not gather around them disciples eager to study under them. They were simply three illustrious scholars who, in their explanation of Holy Writ, followed a kind of *via media* between the schools of Alexandria and Antioch, endeavoring to avoid equally the extreme allegorism of the former and the strict literalism of many members of the latter. The best-known work of the school of Cæsarea is the *Hexæmeron* of St. Basil, in which the holy Doctor propounds so forcibly the literal sense of the narrative of creation.

To whatever causes may be referred the lateness of large exegetical works among the Latins, it must be granted that before the fourth century hardly any such Latin writing appeared in the Western churches. Even in the earlier part of the fourth century, St. Hilary of Poitiers and St. Ambrose are the only two commentators whose exegetical works are considerable, and who give us an idea of the method of interpretation prevalent in their time. They both have undergone the influence of Origen, and indulge too freely in allegorical and mystical explanations.

The bright era in the history of Biblical Interpretation among the Latins opens with the latter part of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century, when such Doctors as St. Jerome (331–420), St. Augustine (354–430), St. Peter Chrysologus († 450), Pope St. Leo the Great († 461), and St. Prosper of Aquitaine († 465) illustrate the Western Church by their numerous and brilliant writings. The most sober of them all, as he is also the best informed, is unquestionably St. Jerome. He is familiar with the writings of Origen, several of which he has rendered himself into Latin, and he professes a genuine admiration for the great Alexandrine Doctor. Nevertheless, his own exegesis is modelled not after Origen, but after the great Fathers of Anti-

och and Cæsarea. Without altogether rejecting allegorical and moral explanations of the sacred writings, he is chiefly anxious to determine their exact literal sense in the light of philology, tradition, and history, and his commentaries, especially those which he wrote on the Old Testament, are excellent works, equally remarkable for their scientific accuracy and their clearness of expression.

Next to St. Jerome comes the illustrious Bishop of Hippo, St. Augustine, who, in his work *On Christian Doctrine*, lays down the wisest rules to be followed for a sound interpretation of Holy Writ, and who throughout most of his writings scatters judicious remarks having a direct bearing upon exegesis. It must be said, however, that while his commentaries abound in constant flashes of genius, and contain the rich results of insight and experience, they also bear to a very large extent the impress of his native subtlety and of his great fondness for allegorical explanations.

After St. Augustine, original interpreters of Holy Writ become very scarce in the Latin Church, and only Junilius Africanus, Cassiodorus, St. Gregory the Great, and St. Isidore of Seville can be mentioned in the course of the sixth and seventh centuries.

3. **The Middle Ages.** Almost all the works of the period which elapsed between the age of the Fathers of the Church and that of the scholastic theologians are simply compilations of excerpts from earlier exegetical writings. These compilations are called *catenæ* (chains), because they are collections of extracts strung after about the same general order, and into which no change is usually introduced, save for the sake of abbreviation or condensation. The name of each Father or ecclesiastical writer whose works have been laid under contribution is given at the end of each extract, and it is but seldom that a compiler gives an opinion of his own.[1]

The principal authors of *Catenæ* among the Greeks are: St. John Damascene († ab. 750), Œcumenius, Arethas, Euthymius, Zigabenus, and Theophylact, all of the tenth century. Among the Latins we may mention more particularly Ven.

[1] The *Glossæ* of this same period differ from the *Catenæ* only in so far that the explanations, borrowed from the Fathers chiefly of the first four centuries, are shorter than in the Catenæ, and are written either in the margin or between the lines of a copy of the Latin Vulgate.

Bede († 735); Alcuin († 804); Rabanus Maurus († 856); Walafrid Strabo († 849), the celebrated author of the *Glossa Ordinaria*, a Catena which remained the ordinary exegetical handbook for several centuries; and, finally, Lanfranc († 1089). Besides these authors of Catenæ, we must not omit the names of more independent scholars, such as the Benedictine Christian Druthmar († 850) among the Latins, and the Patriarch Photius († 891) among the Greeks.

The lack of originality which we have noticed in the predecessors of the scholastic theologians continues to be one of the leading features of the interpreters of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Too many among them display their real power of thought chiefly in the line of allegorical interpretation. It is also to be regretted that those who wrote regular commentaries on parts of Holy Writ should have introduced into their treatises that dry and *a priori* method with which they were wont to handle questions of philosophy and theology. Many of the defects noticeable in scholastic exegesis would have no doubt been avoided had the interpreters of that period been conversant with the original languages, and with the archæology, geography, and history of the Bible: they had certainly the power of mind sufficient to do excellent work in Biblical Interpretation; they lacked the technical knowledge which was gradually attained only long after their time.

The best-known interpreters among the schoolmen are: Hugo of St. Victor († 1141); Abailard († 1142); St. Bernard († 1158); Peter Lombard († 1164); Hugo of St. Cher († 1260); Albertus Magnus († 1280); St. Thomas Aquinas († 1274); St. Bonaventura († 1274); and Roger Bacon († 1248).

The one great commentator of the fourteenth century was Nicholas de Lyra, O.S.F. († 1341), who was well acquainted with Hebrew and Rabbinic traditions. In his important work entitled "*Postillæ perpetuæ, seu brevia commentaria* in universa Biblia," he insisted upon the literal sense, and inserted occasionally a few brief mystical expositions. His lack of acquaintance, however, with the Greek language made the part of his work on the New Testament much inferior to his commentary on the Hebrew Text.

With the revival in Greek learning and art, which began soon after Lyranus and culminated in the *Renaissance*, exegetical writers multiplied and produced works of considerable merit

especially on the New Testament. The principal commentators of this period were Gerson († 1429); Alphonse Tostat († 1455); J. Reuchlin († 1522); Erasmus († 1536); Card. Cajetan († 1534); and Santes Pagnini († 1541).

## § 3. *The Christian Interpretation since the Protestant Reformation.*

**1. Before the Rise of Rationalism.** Here we shall confine ourselves to a brief exposition of the exegetical methods of Luther, the great "prophet" [1] of the early Reformers, and to a distinct mention of the general principles which his helpers and companions held in common with him. As early as 1520 Luther proclaimed openly that he would not submit to authority in exegesis. "*Leges interpretandi verbum Dei non patior.*" [2] He recognized, indeed, the usefulness of patristic writings when they are read with discretion, yet contended that it is by comparing Scripture with clearer Scripture that we must arrive at the truth.[3] We must not twist Holy Writ, but understand it in "its literal sense alone, which is the whole essence of faith and of Christian theology." He also speaks of allegories as the "awkward, unclean, earthy, sluttish rags and shags of interpretation." [4] Strict self-consistency, however, does not seem to have been a special canon of his method of exegesis, for he reverses at times his verdict against allegorical interpretation, as, for instance, when he declares that "*Grammatica quidem necessaria est et vera, sed ea non debet regere res, sed servire rebus.*" [5] In point of fact, "when he reads the doctrines of the Trinity and the Incarnation, and Justification by Faith, and Reformation dogmatics and polemics, into passages written more than a thousand years before the Christian era—when he infers the divinity of the Messias and the 'Communication of Idioms' from the particle את in Gen. v, 22, he is adopting an unreal method, which had been rejected a millennium earlier by the clearer insight and more unbiassed wisdom of the school of

[1] Luther is called thus by FARRAR, History of Interpretation, p. 341.

[2] Letter to Pope Leo X.

[3] Cfr. LUTHER, Comm. in Gen., cap. iii, p. 43*a*.

[4] See G. T. LADD, The Doctrine of Sacred Scripture, vol. ii, p. 169. Cfr. LUTHER, Comm. in Gen., cap. iii, p. 42*a*; cap. xv, p. 179*a*; cap. xxx, p. 417.

[5] Comm. in Gen., cap. xvi, p. 188*b*. Luther is also quoted as having said: "*Grammaticam decet Theologiæ cedere.*"

Antioch. As a consequence of this method, in his commentary on Genesis he adds nothing to Lyranus, except a misplaced dogmatic treatment of patriarchal history." [1]

Two other exegetical principles which were most valuable in the eyes of Luther remain to be mentioned. The first regards the *perspicuity* of Scripture, which he proclaimed as follows: "The Holy Ghost is the plainest writer and speaker that is in heaven or on earth: therefore His words can have no more than the one simple meaning, which we call the scriptural or literal sense." [2] The second is the absolute *right of private judgment*, in virtue of which every Christian may, and indeed must, test his faith by Scripture. Of course such principles could be far more easily formulated than applied, so that it is not surprising to find that Luther himself was not a little puzzled when he was confronted with the fact that, despite the so-called perspicuity of Scripture, there is scarcely a verse in Holy Writ which has not been interpreted in different ways, and when Zwingli, the Anabaptists, Carlstadt, etc., all appealed to the right of private judgment to interpret Scripture in a sense opposed to his own. Nor is it very surprising to find that, despairing to settle exegetical difficulties by simple appeals to the Bible, Melanchthon and Calvin should have advocated recourse to an authority distinct from the Holy Scriptures. The former proposed that all should abide by "a consensus of pious men"; the latter wished that a "synod of true bishops" should be obeyed. Such views were rejected by Luther, who, together with Zwingli, maintained that, in difficult passages, Holy Writ should be interpreted according to "the analogy of faith," i.e., according to the whole tenor of Scripture teaching. But as by the analogy of faith the early reformers soon understood *harmony with received doctrines* the Lutheran rule of interpreting the Bible according to the "analogy of faith" was "soon made to mean the same as the old Romish rule that no explanation is to be admitted which runs counter to the current ecclesiastical dogmas." [3]

[1] FARRAR, History of Interpretation, p. 334. Nicholas Lyranus and Rashi are traceable throughout Luther's Commentary on Genesis, and Richard Simon says rightly that "he usually added nothing to them except his own prejudices."

[2] Answer to Emser, quoted by LADD, The Doctrine of Sacred Scripture, vol. ii, p. 169.

[3] FARRAR, loc. cit., p. 333.

But, however great may have been the doctrinal and exegetical differences between the early reformers and Luther, it is beyond doubt that they were at one with him as regards the following points: (1) The rejection of scholastic methods and of a fourfold Scriptural sense; (2) an instinctive distrust and relative giving up of allegorical interpretation; (3) the repudiation of ecclesiastical tradition as an authority in the interpretation of Holy Writ; (4) the importance of the original languages to get at the exact meaning of the sacred writers; (5) confidence in the possibility of clearing up difficulties—at least as far as essential truths are concerned—by a comparative study of Biblical passages; (6) the tendency to consider "the analogy of faith" as an indispensable rule of Hermeneutics.[1]

Such are the leading principles which were propounded by the early reformers in common with Luther, but to which, like their great leader, they were often unfaithful in their exegetical works.[2]

While Protestant interpreters thus endeavored to frame and apply exegetical rules independently of the traditions of past ages, Catholic commentators showed themselves faithful to the spirit which had ever animated the leading interpreters of the Christian Church. Faithfulness to ecclesiastical tradition proved to them a safeguard against the many vagaries noticeable in the exegetical works of the early reformers, while trust in the works of their predecessors made them avail themselves of their valuable doctrinal and exegetical contents. Furthermore, they so happily combined the practice of a truly scientific method with genuine respect for tradition that the period which elapsed between the rise of Protestantism and that of Rationalism, and was so fertile in Biblical interpreters, has justly been called the "golden age" of Catholics exegesis.

Prominent in this galaxy of able scholars were (1) Andrew Masius († 1573), one of the editors of the Antwerp *Polyglot;* (2) Cornelius Jansenius († 1576), Bishop of Gand[3] and author of an excellent commentary on the Gospels; (3) John Maldonatus (S.J.) († 1583), perhaps still our best commentator of

[1] Cfr. LADD, loc. cit., p. 171; FARRAR, loc. cit., p. 342.

[2] The principal commentaries of the early reformers are sufficiently indicated in VIGOUROUX, Manuel Biblique, vol. i, n. 217; and CHAUVIN, Leçons d'Introduction Générale, p. 600 sq.

[3] Not to be taken for his nephew, the celebrated heretic of the same name.

the four Gospels; (4) Francis Foreiro (O.P.) († 1587), the author of a remarkable commentary on Isaias; (5) William Estius († 1613), whose excellent work on the epistles of St. Paul cannot be too much recommended to the student; (6) Benedict Justiniani (S.J.) († 1622), another remarkable commentator of St. Paul; (7) James Bonfrère (S.J.) († 1642), known chiefly for his *Præloquia in totam Scripturam;* (8) John Morin († 1659), whose critical works and ability are worthy of all praise; (9) lastly, Augustin Calmet (O.S.B.) (1672–1757), who in his learned commentary on the whole Bible gives chiefly the literal sense of the sacred writings.

In strange contrast with the harmony which characterizes Catholic exegesis at this epoch stands the confusion into which Protestant interpretation soon fell after the death of the great reformers. The leading features common to the various "confessional schools" which arose at the time are the following: (1) They were all animated by a strong spirit of opposition to Rome, and in consequence none of them lost sight of the essentially Protestant principle which placed the authority of Scripture far above that of tradition; (2) they maintained that the Bible contains a consistent and symmetrical system of doctrine, which can be extracted from it by means of grammar and logic, and must be considered as the *Regula fidei*, as a standard of doctrine against which no interpretation of the Bible should prevail; (3) they asserted that the original text of Holy Writ had been transmitted in its absolute purity, so that the smallest vowel-sign or accent of the Hebrew Scriptures, the most irregular forms found in the Greek New Testament, were to be held as having emanated directly from the divine influence of the Holy Spirit; (4) they endeavored to counterbalance the decisive influence of private judgment upon Biblical exegesis, by holding that the meaning of the difficult passages of Holy Writ should be determined by no other means than its own teaching contained in clearer passages and already embodied—as was claimed by each school—in a binding "Symbol," "Formula," or "Confession of Faith." Thus a certain kind of unity and stability of interpretation was secured within each Confessional School, but to the detriment of freedom and of vitality.

In fact the only theological works and the only commentaries of this period which still retained any vitality were those of smaller schools, which, while recognizing tacitly the faith of

their respective churches as a guide in their exposition of the Holy Scriptures, yet claimed and exercised a certain amount of independence.[1]

**2. Since the Rise of Rationalism.** With the middle of the eighteenth century a new era opened in the history of Biblical Interpretation. It was now no longer possible to think of the original text of the Bible as having been transmitted in its primitive purity, and the yoke of the objective standard of doctrine embodied in the "Symbols" or "Confessions" had gradually become unbearable to many scholars of the Lutheran and Reformed churches. These scholars disliked sincerely every rule of faith, which, as they thought, could be just as erroneous as those "creeds" or "confessions" which had been imposed by Protestant dogmatists since the time of the early reformers, and they instinctively yearned for the full enjoyment of the right of private judgment. Thus were they carried back to the rejection of every exterior authority, that is, to a principle which lay at the very basis of the Protestant Reformation, and which will ever be the main underlying principle of the Rationalistic method of interpretation.

Besides this general principle, and indeed as a natural consequence of it, Rationalism admits that reason alone is the means whereby Holy Writ should be interpreted, and that Scripture should be understood in harmony with the data of human reason. Not only does it affirm that the sacred books should be studied from a historical point of view, that is, as writings which came into existence in time and which must not be comprehended from the standpoint of our own times and ways of thinking; it proceeds farther, and contends that everything in the Holy Scriptures that would run counter or simply transcend the laws of human experience should not be accepted literally, but rather treated as things of the kind are when met with in confessedly uninspired books.

However contrary to the personal views of Luther concerning the Bible this second principle of Rationalism may appear at first sight, it remains true, nevertheless, that it is simply a further consequence of the absolute right of private judgment, for which the chief leader of Protestantism fought so resolutely

[1] For the names and tenets of these smaller schools, as also for the names of the leading exegetes of all the more or less *Orthodox* Protestant schools of the period, see unabridged "General Introduction," p. 456 sq.

against Rome and against Melanchthon and Calvin. The supremacy of reason over the Bible was so natural an outcome of Luther's principle of private judgment that it was formulated and applied, at a very early date, by the Socinians. The great leader of this Protestant sect was Faustus Socinus (Sozini, † 1604), who, in his various writings, "made the divine and authoritative character of the sacred books dependent on their authenticity and on the conformity of their contents with man's reason, so that everything in the Bible which runs counter to or departs from reason does not come from God, and must be set aside." [1]

The Socinian doctrines did not play, it is true, a very apparent part in the history of interpretation during the golden age of Protestant scholasticism which soon followed the death of the early reformers. Yet their advocates never gave up the fight against the representatives of the Lutheran and Calvinistic "Formulas" or "Confessions," and were greatly aided in their efforts to show the supremacy of human reason by the interest which gathered around the rational methods advocated by Bacon, Descartes, and Wolf, and by the influence which was exerted upon the public mind by the works of the English deists, the German illuminati, and the French philosophers.[2] Other circumstances of the same period contributed much to render the old positions of Socinus acceptable to many scholars, who, especially in Germany, formed a school of transition between the veterans of Protestant dogmatism, and the coming phalanxes of Rationalism. They were men who, though accessible to the Rationalistic theories, did not allow themselves to be carried away by them. At their head stood Johann August Ernesti († 1791), and the best-known scholars besides him were J. C. Döderlein († 792), J. G. and E. F. C. Rosenmüller († 1815, † 1835).

Side by side with this school of transition flourished a more thorough-going school under the leadership of Johann Salomo Semler († 1791), who invented his famous *Accommodation Theory*. Whatever defied the critic's acumen or the believer's

[1] E. Rabaud, Histoire de la Doctrine de l'Inspiration des Saintes Ecritures, p. 89. The writings of Socinus are found in the Bibliotheca Fratrum Polonorum quos Unitarios Vocant (Amsterdam, 1656 sq.).

[2] For details concerning these various sources of influence, cfr. Hurst, History of Rationalism.

spiritual grasp he explained away on the principle that it was local and temporary. Whatever in the New Testament transcended or ran counter to the philosophical views of his age he ascribed to the desire of Christ or His Apostles to adapt themselves to the prejudices or other mistaken notions of their contemporaries, and thus reduced their various utterances concerning angels, the Messias, demons, the resurrection of the dead, etc., etc., to so many *accommodations* to prevailing errors.

Instead of calling attention to what then appeared the objectionable parts of Revelation, and disposing of them as accommodations to current prejudices, the celebrated Immanuel Kant († 1804) endeavored to educe from, or rather read into, the words of Holy Writ moral teachings of the highest order, as being alone constitutive of religion and worthy of the all-perfect revealing God. The only value and object of the Bible is, according to him, to introduce, illustrate, and confirm the religion or morality of *reason*, and, in consequence, it should be interpreted, in its various parts (historical, dogmatic, prophetic, etc.), so as to yield a sense calculated to further man's morality.

Kant's exegetical system gave place gradually to a new school of interpretation which received the name of *psychologico-historical*, from the twofold leading aspect of its method: it regarded the facts recorded in the Bibles as indeed *historical*, yet as needing to be interpreted by means of *psychological* data. The substance of the Biblical narrative is therefore to be retained as in accordance with actual occurrences, but the miraculous dress with which it is invested should be, and can easily be, set aside by the interpreter who knows how to enter into the frame of mind of the inspired narrator, and supply the natural circumstances which must have occurred, but which the imagination of the sacred writer caused him to take and describe as marvellous facts. The following example will show the nature of the system as developed chiefly by Eichhorn († 1827) and Paulus († 1851). It exhibits Paulus' exposition of John vi, 19: When they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty stadia (about two hours' space) they see Jesus walking about over the sea (John xxi, 1, on the bank or shore, which is higher than the sea) and near the ship (which kept near the shore). In a similar naturalistic way are the plain statements of extraordinary facts contained in the Bible brought down to the level of human experience and comprehension.

Akin to the foregoing theory is the mythical system of interpretation, which was applied to the Old Testament chiefly by De Wette († 1849), and to the New by Strauss († 1874). Like the psychologico-historical, the mythical theory believes in the sincerity of the Biblical narrators, but, differently from it, regards the very substance of most important facts as the product of man's imagination, though they are apparently described as so many occurrences. The mythical system as applied to Our Lord's life by Strauss, in his *Leben Jesu* (1835), has been well summed up as follows: "There was a fixed idea in the Jewish mind, fed on the Old Testament writings, that the Messias should perform certain miracles—heal the sick, raise the dead, etc.; there was also a strong persuasion in the minds of the disciples of Jesus that He was actually the promised Messias. In consequence, the mythico-poetical faculty invented the miracles corresponding to the Messianic conception, and ascribed them to Him." [1] The leading disciples of Strauss in Germany were Ludwig Feuerbach († 1872) and Bruno Bauer († 1882), who soon showed clearly by the extreme positions which they assumed whither their master's teaching truly led.

The last Rationalistic system of interpretation to be mentioned is that of Ferdinand Baur († 1860), whose peculiar *Tendenz* theory was set forth in connection with the last stage of the history of the New Testament Canon. His method of exegesis is the natural outcome of his critical conclusions about the formation of our New Testament writings. As he admits that they were respectively written *for* or *against* the two great parties which existed in the early Church, viz., the party of Peter and that of Paul, their historical character should be studied from that standpoint. They are literary productions which bear the impress of the time when they were composed, but can be of little use besides making us acquainted with those long-extinguished parties.[2]

It is not to be supposed that these various schools of Rationalism did not meet with numerous and able opponents even in Germany, the stronghold of Rationalistic exegesis. Despite the great and constant inroads of Rationalism into the camp of

[1] Art. Mythical Theory (the) in SCHAFF-HERZOG, Encyclopædia of Religious Knowledge.

[2] The history of the Schools of *Higher Criticism* will be given in the forthcoming volumes on *Special* Introduction.

conservative Protestants, excellent scholars among them neglected nothing to counteract the disastrous influence of unbelieving critics. They followed step by step the ever-varying forms of Rationalistic interpretation, called attention to its *a priori* principle,—the denial of the supernatural,—and pointed out the unsatisfactory or even extravagant character of its conclusions. To do this more effectively, they improved their own methods of study by availing themselves of every advance in philology, Textual Criticism, history, archæology, etc., which had been achieved since the middle of the eighteenth century. The best known among these conservative scholars are Hävernick († 1845); Stier († 1862); Hengstenberg († 1869); Œhler († 1872); Tholuck († 1877); Philippi († 1882); Kiel († 1888); and Delitzsch († 1890).[1] It cannot be denied, however, that during the last fifteen years Rationalistic exegesis seems to have got the upper hand in German universities to an extent unknown up to that time.

The case stands differently in England and America, where the various Protestant denominations have preserved much of their *confessional* spirit. In Great Britain, among the more conservative scholars may be mentioned Alford, Beet, F. C. Cook, A. B. Davidson, Ellicott, Fausset, Gloag, Lightfoot, Perowne, Plummer, Plumptre, Salmon, Swete, Westcott, and Wordsworth; among the less conservative, Bruce, Dods, Cheyne, Driver, Kirkpatrick, Sanday, and Stanley. Among American interpreters of the more conservative type may be named, Alexander, Green, Hackett, Hovey, Robinson, Schaff, Moses Stuart, Terry, and Whedon; and among the less conservative, Briggs, E. P. Gould, Moore, Toy, H. P. Smith, B. W. Bacon, etc.

While Rationalistic Protestants drew from the principles of Luther the logical consequences therein contained, and conservative Protestants were saved from similar denials of supernatural Revelation only because they clung to the authority of their respective "Formulas" or "Confessions of Faith," Catholic scholars moved securely on the lines of patristic tradition, such

[1] The titles of their principal works are given by A. Cave, Introduction to Theology. Most of them have been rendered into English, and are published by T. T. Clark, Edinburgh. Somewhat less conservative are the following German scholars: Ebrard, Lange, Meyer, Olshausen, Riehm, Strack, and Weiss. Most of their works have also appeared in English translations.

as they had been re-stated by the Council of Trent, and acted upon by the great commentators of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Besides this great safeguard, they have enjoyed, especially in the last century, the precious advantage of having at their disposal for interpreting the sacred text the data of history, geography, archæology, etc., to an extent unknown to their predecessors. Again, as the polemics of conservative Protestants were chiefly directed against Rationalism, Catholic scholars were able to draw from such conservative sources valuable arguments against the enemies of divine Revelation. Finally, as the exegetical method almost invariably followed by Catholic commentators during this last period has been that of the Antiochian school and of the excellent Catholic interpreters of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, they have been chiefly concerned with the literal sense, studying it in the light of the context, of parallel passages, of linguistics, etc.; and some of their productions can compare in value with those of the best scholars of the day outside the Church.

We subjoin a select list of the most important works in German, French, English, and Latin which Catholic commentators have published during the nineteenth century:

I. IN GERMAN:

Aug. BISPING, Exeget. Handb. zum N. T. (2d Edit. 1867, sqq.).
BICKELL: Der Prediger (1885); Job (1894); Die Sprüche, etc.
GUTBERLET: Das Buch der Weisheit (1874); Das Buch Tobias (1877).
Adalb. MAIER: Johan., Roem., I, II Corinth., Hebraebr. (1847–1865).
NETELER: Ezechiel (1870); Die Büch. der Chronik (1872); Esdr., Nehem. und Esther (1877); Der Proph. Isaias (1876).
ROHLING: Das Salom. Sprüchbuch (1879); Daniel (1876).
SCHANZ: Matth. (1879); Marcus (1881); Lucas (1883); Johann (1885).
SCHOLZ: Comment. zum Joel (1885); Jerem. (1880); Hoseas (1882).
THALHOFER: Erklärung der Psalmen (1880).

II. IN FRENCH:

LA SAINTE BIBLE (Lethielleux, Paris, 25 vols). A Commentary on all the books of the Old and New Test., by CLAIR, CRELIER, FILLION, DRACH, LESÊTRE, and TROCHON.
DEHAUT: l'Evangile Expliqué, Défendu, Medité (4 vols.).
MOTAIS: l'Ecclésiaste (2 vols., 1876).
LAGRANGE: le Livre des Juges.
FILLION: Les Psaumes Commentés (1893).

FOUARD: Vie de Notre Seigneur J. C. (2 vols.); St. Pierre; St. Paul (2 vols.).

LE HIR: Etudes Bibliques (2 vols., 1869); Job (1873); Les Psaumes (1876); Isaie, Jeremie, Ezechiel (1877); Le Cantique des Cantiques (1883).

LOISY: Le Livre de Job (1892); Les Evangiles Synoptiques; Histoire du Canon, etc.

VIGOUROUX: Manuel Biblique; Bible et Découvertes Modernes, etc

III. IN ENGLISH:

KENRICK: Commentary on the Entire Bible.

MCEVILLY: An Exposition of the Epistles of St. Paul and the Catholic Epistles (2 vols., 1875); An Exposition of the Gospels (3 vols., 1888 sq.).

MAAS: Christ in Type and Prophecy (2 vols., 1893); On St. Matthew (1898).

H. J. COLERIDGE: Works on the Life of Christ.

Jos. RICKABY: Notes on St. Paul (Corinthians; Galat.; Rom., 1898).

Bern. WARD: St. Luke (1897); one of the volumes of St. Edmund's College Series of Scripture Handbooks.

IV. IN LATIN:

SCRIPTURÆ SACRÆ CURSUS COMPLETUS, auctoribus R. CORNELY, G. KNABENBAUER, Fr. DE HUMMELAUER, aliisque Societatis Jesu presbyteris. A Commentary on the whole Bible, not yet completed.

BEELEN: In Philip., In Rom. (1852–1854); In Acta Apostolorum (1850).

CORLUY: Comm. in Evangelium S. Joannis (1878); Spicilegium Dogmatico-Biblicum (2 vols., 1884).

KAULEN: Liber Jonæ prophetæ (1862).

NICKES: De Libro Judithæ (1854); De Libro Estheræ (1856).

PATRIZI (Card): De Evangeliis (1853); In Acta Comm. (1867).

VAN STEENKISTE: In Librum Psalmorum (3 vols., 1870); In Evangel. S. Matt. (4 vols., 1876); In S. Pauli Epistolas (2 vols., 4th edit., 1886); In Catholicas Epistolas.

# PART IV.

## BIBLICAL THEOPNEUSTICS.

## SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTER XV.

### History of the Doctrine of Biblical Inspiration.

**I. Introductory Remarks.**

1. General Notion of Inspiration (its Difference from Revelation).

**II. First Period: Before the Completion of the Bible.**

1. Statements of the Sacred Books.
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# PART IV.

## BIBLICAL THEOPNEUSTICS.

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### CHAPTER XV.

#### HISTORY OF THE DOCTRINE OF BIBLICAL INSPIRATION.

##### § 1. *Introductory Remarks.*

**1. General Notion of Inspiration** (*its Difference from Revelation*). The word "inspiration," like many other theological terms, is derived from the Latin Vulgate, which uses the expression "divinitus *inspirata*"—a literal rendering of the Greek word θεόπνευστος—in a passage where St. Paul describes the action of God in the composition of Scripture.[1] It conveys the general idea of a divine "breathing into" (*spirare*, in) the sacred writers, somewhat analogous to the action by which God is represented as breathing man's soul into his body (Gen. ii, 7; Wisdom xv, 11), and as "giving understanding" to men (Job xxxii, 8); but yet different from it in this, that the divine breathing which came upon certain men and made them inspired was imparted for the purpose of transmitting truth by writing to their fellow men.[2]

[1] "Omnis Scriptura divinitus inspirata" (II Tim. iii. 16).

[2] Cfr. II Petr. i, 21, and remarks connected therewith in unabridged "General Introduction," p. 471 sq.

In fact it is this specific commission of transmitting truth to others which distinguishes the supernatural gift of Inspiration from that of Revelation. By Revelation is understood the direct disclosure by God to man of something unknown to him; whereas by Inspiration is meant that actuating energy of the Holy Ghost by the influence of which men specially selected by God made truth known to others.[1] The difference thus far drawn between Revelation and Inspiration will be clearly realized by an illustration. Suppose one to whom his friend has simply disclosed a secret: he would be like to one who has simply received a revelation. Suppose, on the contrary, the case of a man who, besides receiving such a disclosure, should receive the mission of transmitting it to others: he would be like to one truly inspired. However faithfully the former can make a written record of the secret disclosed to him, his work will simply contain a revelation; whereas, let the latter write down for the benefit of others the revelation made to him but intended for them, his record will justly be considered as inspired. But there is a further difference, worthy of a passing mention, between Revelation and Inspiration. Revelation implies the supernatural communication from God to man of a truth unknown to him, but this is not necessarily so with Inspiration. "In many cases," as E. LÉVESQUE judiciously remarks, "a revelation will not be necessary to the sacred writer; he knows the things naturally, either as a witness, or by the affirmation of others, or by reliable documents, he needs only inspiration. . . . Revelation never constitutes inspiration: they are two things quite distinct, just like to receive truth and to transmit it." [2]

Biblical Inspiration must therefore be conceived as a divine and positive influence exerted upon special men for the purpose of transmitting truth by writing to their fellow men.

[1] Cfr. SCHANZ, Christian Apology, vol. ii, pp. vi, vii, of Preface to Engl. Transl.

[2] E. LÉVESQUE, Essai sur la Nature de l'Inspiration des Livres Saints, p. 5 (p. 7 in the Engl. Transl.).

## § 2. *First Period: Biblical Inspiration before the Completion of the Bible.*

**1. Statements of the Sacred Books.** A careful examination of the Canonical Books of the Old Testament proves that they contain only a small number of statements which may be considered as bearing witness to their inspiration. Thus in the law of Moses there are only two statements, viz., Exod. xvii, 14, and xxxiv, 27, wherein it is expressly said that the great lawgiver of Israel was directed by God to write parts of our Pentateuch. The other passages[1] sometimes referred to in this connection are not to the point, inasmuch as they do not mention his divine commission to write such passages as would be required to invest them with an inspired character. The same thing is to be said in reference to Josue i, 7, 8; viii, 31; xxiv, 26.

It is only when one comes to the writings of the greater and the smaller prophets that he meets again with explicit declarations that "men of God" received from Him the express command to record their message to Israel (cfr., for example, Isai. viii, 1; xxx, 8; Jerem. xxxvi, 1–4; 27, 28, 32; Ezech. xxiv, 1, 2; Habac. ii, 2). These and similar passages testify in favor only of the inspired character of those portions of the prophetical writings to which they refer, and the same must probably be said of Isai. xxxiv, 16, where we find the expression "the book of Yahweh": in this, as in the other passages just mentioned, not an entire book, but only a relatively short section of a prophetical writing is apparently referred to. The case is different with Daniel ix, 2, where the expression "the books" refers to works the inspired character

[1] These passages are: Exod. xxiv, 3, 4, 7; Numb. xxxiii, 2; Deuter. xxxi, 9 22, 24. Cfr. Dixon, A General Introduction to the Sacred Scriptures, p. 24 (Balto., 1853).

of which was universally admitted at the time when the prophecy of Daniel was composed.[1]

If we leave aside, as too indirect, the passages of Ecclesiasticus and Wisdom which have sometimes been pointed out as affirming the inspired character of the Old Testament,[2] there remains only one Scriptural statement to be mentioned in that connection. It is found in the Second Book of the Machabees (viii, 23), where the expression "the Sacred Book," points, no doubt, to a general belief of the time—clearly shared in by the sacred writer—that the book thus referred to is really inspired.

In the writings of the New Testament, as in those of the Old, there are but few explicit testimonies to the inspired character of the books of the old Covenant. One of these is contained in the Gospels, viz., in St. Matt. xxii, 43, where Jesus says of David that he spoke "in spirit" (cfr. the parallel expression in St. Mark xii, 36: "David saith by the Holy Ghost"). Another testimony is supplied by St. Paul, in his Second Epistle to Timothy (iii, 16), when he writes: "All Scripture inspired of God is profitable to teach," etc.;[3] and this second testimony has the advantage over the one just mentioned, that it affirms the divine origin of the Canonical Books of the Old Testament generally. In like manner St. Peter, both in his second epistle (i, 20, sq.) and in his second public discourse (Acts iii, 18–24), bears distinct witness to the divine influence by means of which the sacred writers of the Old Dispensation composed their works.

The foregoing are not, however, the only valid testimonies which the writings of the New Testament contain in favor of the inspiration of those of the Old. In view of the fact stated above, to wit, that the expressions "the Books," "the Sacred

[1] In Daniel ix, 2, "the books" designated are most likely "the books of Moses."

[2] Cfr. W. Lee, The Inspiration of Holy Scripture, p. 62 sq.

[3] The phrase may also be rendered: "All Scripture is inspired of God *and* profitable. . . ." *And* is wanting in the Vulgate.

Book," etc., were currently used among the Jews to denote the supernatural origin of their canonical writings, it may readily be admitted that the similar expressions, such as "Holy Scripture," "the Scripture," "the written Word," [1] which the New Testament employs in speaking of the same writings have not a different meaning, and therefore tell in favor of the inspired character of the Canonical Books of the Old Testament. This inference appears all the stronger because Our Lord Himself refers to Moses and the prophets without distinguishing God's Word from the writer's, saying, "It is written"; "the Scripture says," etc.; and also because the New Testament writers do so after the example of their divine Master.

"Of its own inspiration the New Testament naturally contains no direct proof, unless the beginning of the Apocalypse is a case in point. If I Tim. v, 18, were a quotation of St. Luke, it would put his Gospel on a level with the Old Testament. But, as the passage contains a previous quotation from the Old Testament, there is still room for doubt. . . . St. Paul's occasional reference to the Spirit of God which he claims to possess, is not made for the purpose of proving that his letters were inspired, but in order to claim divine authority for his Apostolic action generally. 'I think that I also have the Spirit of God' (I Cor. vii, 40), he says; and he speaks of himself as one having obtained mercy to be faithful (ibid. vii, 25). In the introduction of the Epistle to the Galatians he appeals to the divine origin of his Gospel. Now this Gospel was first and chiefly his oral preaching to the heathen. . . . St. Peter (Second Epist. iii, 15, 16), too, places the epistles of Paul on a level with 'the other Scriptures,' and says that Paul, 'according to the wisdom given him, hath written to you.' " [2]

[1] Cfr. Rom. i, 2; iv, 3; ix, 17; Galat. iii, 8, 22; II Tim. iii, 15; Acts i, 16; iv, 25; etc., etc.

[2] P. SCHANZ, A Christian Apology, vol. iii, p. 407 sq. (Engl. Transl., 2d edit.).

**2. Opinions of Jewish Rabbis concerning Biblical Inspiration.** The foregoing exposition of the testimonies which the writers of the Bible give directly to its inspiration is in harmony with the manner in which Jewish tradition speaks of the Canonical Books of the Old Testament. It is in harmony with the first traces of this tradition which have been preserved in Baruch ii, 28, and I Machab. xii, 5 sqq., and more distinctly still with the positions of Philo and Josephus. The former (about 20 B.C. to 40 A.D.) uses such expressions as "the Holy Scriptures," "the Holy Books," "the Holy Writings," "the Divine Word," "the Inspired Oracle," "the Holy Oracles the most trustful witnesses," etc., etc., all clearly indicative of the sacred and inspired character which he and his contemporaries ascribed to the Canonical Books of the Old Testament.[1] Philo goes even farther and gives a theory of inspiration in which he uses the reflections of Plato upon the pagan inspiration or *μανία* to illustrate the Jewish doctrine. According to him, inspiration is a kind of "ecstasy," and the greater the degree of inspiration with which one is favored the greater also the unconsciousness, or at least the passivity, of the man inspired. "The prophet," he says, "does not speak any words of his own; he is only the instrument of God, who inspires and who speaks through him."[2] Yet Philo admits degrees of inspiration, assigns to Moses the first place in the scale of inspired writers, and thinks that the very words of the Old Testament are inspired of God[3]

The positions of Josephus regarding the authority of the Old Testament and the nature of the divine influence which actuated the prophets coincide with those of Philo. Josephus speaks of Moses as a prophet so exalted that his words should

[1] The references to Philo's works are found in H. E. RYLE, Philo and Holy Scripture, p. xvi.

[2] De Specialibus Legibus, § 8.

[3] Cfr. Vita Moysis, Book ii, § 7.

be considered as those of God.[1] He says tha "they are only prophets who have written the original and earliest accounts of things as they learned them of God Himself by inspiration. . . ." He then goes on telling of the twenty-two Jewish books "which are justly bel'eved to be divine . . .," and of the attachment of all the Jews to their sacred writings.[2]

It is beyond doubt that these views of Josephus concerning the inspired character of the Canonical Books of the Old Testament, though expressed in a popular and "Grecianized" form, were substantially those admitted by the rabbis of his time and by his countrymen generally.[3] "That the rabbis entertained the same views of inspiration appears not only from the distinctive name of 'Holy Writings' given by them to the Scriptures, but also from the directions that their touch defiled the hands,"[4] so that they may not be touched inconsiderately, but with religious awe. The whole Pentateuch was especially regarded as dictated by God, and even the last eight verses of Deuteronomy, in which the death of Moses is recorded, were said to have been written by Moses himself by means of divine Revelation. All the other books were, however, cited with the same formula as "the Law" itself, and were considered as truly inspired.[5]

Finally, it is certain that the notion of Biblical Inspirat'on implied in the eyes of the Jewish rabbis the inspiration of the very words of Holy Writ.

[1] Antiq. of the Jews, Book iv, chap. viii, § 49.

[2] Against Apion, §§ 7, 8. Like Philo, Josephus affirms that the prophets were unconscious and passive vehicles of the divine message (Antiq. of the Jews, Book iv, chap. vi, § 5; etc.).

[3] Cfr. the peculiar expressions of the Sanhedrists in St. John ix, 28, 29, and the words of St. Paul to Timothy (Second Epist. iii, 15).

[4] A. EDERSHEIM, Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah, vol. ii, p. 685.

[5] For details, see SCHÜRER, The Jewish People in the Time of Christ, Divis. ii, vol. i, pp. 307–312 (Engl. Transl.).

## § 3. *Second Period. Biblical Inspiration before the Rise of Protestantism.*

**1. The Christian Writers of the First Two Centuries.** The idea of inspiration which we have thus far seen reflected in the sacred writings themselves and in Jewish tradition was naturally adopted by the early converts to Christianity. On embracing the faith, men like Clement of Rome, Polycarp of Smyrna, Ignatius of Antioch, and the authors of the epistle ascribed to Barnabas and of the Pastor of Hermas, were taught by word of mouth, and by perusal of the Canonical Books, to look upon these same books as not simply containing revealed doctrine, but also as having been composed under the positive influence of God's Holy Spirit. This doctrine they readily admitted, and by reason of the special character of their own writings, which were practical and expository, they naturally did but re-echo what they had been taught regarding Biblical Inspiration, and did not offer any theory as to its intimate nature. In fact all their allusions to inspiration are incidental.[1]

When the Apostolic Fathers give way to the apologetical writers, opinions as to the nature of inspiration begin to appear. Thus St. Justin, the first of the apologists whose writings have come down to us, not only quotes Scripture in such singularly expressive manner as the "above-mentioned prophet and king (David) speaks thus by the spirit of prophecy";[2] "the holy spirit of prophecy taught us this, telling us by Moses";[3] "the prophet Isaias being divinely inspired by the same Spirit";[4] etc., etc.; but he offers an explanation of the psychological process going on in the mind of the inspired writers. In his *First Apology*[5] he says that "when you hear the utter-

[1] These allusions are given in full in unabridged "General Introduction," p. 481 sq. See also WESTCOTT, Introduction to the Study of the Gospels, Appendix B.

[2] First Apology, chap. xl.

[3] Ibid., chap. xliv.

[4] Ibid., chap. xxxv.

[5] Chap. xxxvi.

ances of the prophets spoken as it were personally, you must not suppose that they proceed from the men who are inspired, but from the divine Word who moves them."

In like strain, another Christian apologist, Athenagoras (fl. 2d cent.) describes the Jewish prophets as men who, "while entranced and deprived of their natural powers of reason by the influence of the Divine Spirit, uttered that which was wrought in them, the Spirit using them as its instruments, as a flute-player breathes into a flute." [1]

The last apologetical writer to be mentioned is St. Theophilus of Antioch, who, about the middle of the second century, addressed his admirable defence of Christianity to a heathen named Autolycus. According to him, "the contents of the Prophets and of the Gospels are found to be consistent, because all the writers spoke by the inspiration of the one Spirit of God." [2] In another passage he speaks of "the words of the prophets as the words of God." [3] Again, he describes the gift of inspiration in about the same manner as Justin and Athenagoras when he says: [4] "The men of God, borne along by the Holy Spirit, and gifted with prophecy, having inspiration and wisdom from God, were taught of Him and became holy and just. Wherefore, also, they were deemed worthy to be made the instruments of God and receive the wisdom which cometh from Him, by which wisdom they spoke of the creation of the world and all other things. . . . And there was not one or two, but many, at various times and seasons among the Hebrews, and also among the Greeks there was the Sibyl."

It was only natural that men educated in the principles of heathen philosophy, such as the apologists just quoted, should, especially when writing controversial works against the

[1] A Plea for the Christians, chap. viii.
[2] Ad Autolycum, Book iii, chap. xii.
[3] Ibid., Book ii, chap. xxxiv (cfr. also Book i, chap. xiv).
[4] Ibid., Book ii, chap. ix.

heathen, apply their early belief about the pagan *μανία* to explain or define the Christian idea of inspiration. This is, in fact, suggested by the last words of Theophilus regarding the Sibyl of the Greeks, and by references of St. Justin to the Sibyl and Hystaspes (cfr. *First Apology of Justin*, chaps. xx, xliv). It is highly probable, however, that their own theory as to the nature of Biblical Inspiration was directly borrowed from the tradition of the Jewish rabbis, and particularly from the works of the celebrated Alexandrian Jew, Philo, whose very expressions they reproduce.

As belonging also to the second century we must mention St. Irenæus, the holy Bishop of Lyons, who clearly shows himself independent of Alexandrian influence. He wrote not against pagan unbelievers, but against heretics, who, though rejecting many Catholic truths, still preserved a distinct belief in the inspiration of Holy Writ. This accounts, no doubt, for the fact that he never treats the topic, as we would say, *ex professo*, but simply refers occasionally to it. He maintains that "the Scriptures are indeed perfect, since they were uttered (*dictæ*) by the Word of God and His Spirit."[1] In one passage he even tells us that Matthew might certainly have said, "Now the birth of *Jesus* was on this wise"; but the Holy Spirit, foreseeing the corrupters of the truth, and guarding by anticipation against their deceit, says by Matthew, "But the birth of *Christ* was on this wise."[2] Yet he admits that "from many instances we may discover that the Apostle (St. Paul) frequently uses hyperbata on account of the rapidity of his sentences and of the vehemence of the spirit which is in him. . . ."[3] When these and similar passages of St. Irenæus are allowed their full weight they seem to point to the two following conclusions: (1) he believes no less sincerely than the other Catholic writers of the second

[1] Against Heresies, Book ii, chap. xxviii, § 2.
[2] Ibid., Book iii, chap. xvi, § 2.
[3] Ibid., Book iii, chap. vii, § 2.

century in the inspiration of Holy Writ; (2) but more distinctly than they, he admits, together with this divine element, another, a human element, so to speak, which he recognizes particularly in connection with the epistles of St. Paul.

**2. Patristic Doctrine of Inspiration during the Following Centuries.** As in the first two, so in the subsequent centuries, the Fathers and Doctors of the Church are unanimous in proclaiming the inspired character of the Canonical Scriptures. This is the case, for instance, with the Italian writers Caius (fl. 210), Novatian (fl. 251), and St. Hippolytus of Porto († 230); and with the North African Latin writers, Tertullian († ab. 220) and St. Cyprian († 258).

The same thing must be said of the two great teachers of the Alexandrian school, Clement († ab. 220) and Origen († 254), who expressly maintained the inspiration of Holy Writ, despite the many difficulties which they met in their scientific study of the sacred text. It was their purpose to reconcile Greek culture with Christianity, and this led them to frame theories which exercised considerable influence during their lifetime and afterwards. The principal views of Clement in this connection may be briefly stated as follows: Although Greek philosophy and prophets may be traced back to God's providence in the world, yet they are very inferior to the Revelation and the prophets of Israel:[1] the former were but an indirect, the latter a direct preparation for Christ. God spoke to men in the Law, the Prophets, and the Psalms, so that Holy Writ offers a secure basis to our faith: "Not one tittle of the Scriptures," says he, "shall pass without being fulfilled, for the mouth of the Lord, the Holy Spirit, spoke it."[2] Elsewhere he affirms that "there is no discord between the Law and the Gospel, because they both proceed from one

[1] Cfr., for instance, Miscellanies, Book vi, chap. viii; Pædag., Book i, chap. xi.
[2] Exhortation to the Heathen, chap. ix.

and the same author, God."[1] The divine influence which he recognizes as exerted upon the sacred writers he considers as far different from the pagan ecstasis, for, according to him, the ecstatic state is the characteristic feature of false prophets.[2] Yet this same divine influence made "almost the whole of Scripture speak to us in an oracular language,"[3] the enigmatic sense of which should be investigated with humility, patience, and obedience to the tradition of the Church. Finally, he appeals to this inner allegorical meaning to vindicate the perpetual usefulness of many passages of the Holy Scriptures.

The views of Clement were shared by his greatest pupil, Origen,[4] with this difference, however, that the latter pushes them farther, with a view to solve the difficulties with which his personal study of the sacred text has made him acquainted. Thus, while Clement is satisfied with showing in a prac ical manner how the typical sense of Holy Writ enables the Christian interpreter to vindicate the truth or the usefulness of scriptural statements concerning things that belong to the past,[5] Origen wants to make of allegorical interpretation a universal principle of solution for difficulties connected with the Holy Scriptures. For this purpose he constantly emphasizes what seems to him self-contradictory, unworthy of God, etc., in the sacred writings, and infers from it the necessity to have recourse to the allegorical meaning.[6] In particular he argues vigorously that this allegorical sense is the only possible solution of the many discrepancies of the Evangelists. "If one," says he, "were to set them all forth, then would he turn dizzy, and either desist from trying to establish all the Gospels in truth and attach himself to one, . . . or, admitting the

[1] Miscellanies, Book ii, chap. xxiii.
[2] Miscell., Book i, chap. xvii.
[3] Miscell., Book v, chap. vi.
[4] For details see unabridged "General Introduction."
[5] Clement: Miscellanies, Book ii, chap. xvi; Book v, chap. vi; etc.
[6] Cfr. Origen, In Exod., Homil. ii; In Josue, Homil. ix; etc., etc.

four, grant that their truth does not lie in their corporeal forms" (that is, in their literal or historical sense).[1]

Differently, also, from Clement of Alexandria, Origen ascribed the peculiarities of style in the New Testament writings and their linguistic defects to the natural traits of their respective authors.[2] Had he gone no farther, he would practically have adopted a view which we have already seen admitted by St. Irenæus. But this recognition of a human element in the composition of the Apostolic writings soon led him to maintain a difference in the degree of inspiration among the sacred writers. He held that the inspiration of the Apostles was not the same as that of the prophets, and that in the writings of the former there are many passages the tenor of which excludes an immediate influence on the part of God.[3] Yet he always distinctly affirmed that the New Testament writers were shielded from every kind of error.[4]

The opposition to Origen's extreme allegorism gradually centred in the Antiochian school. Yet even that school underwent the influence of his views concerning inspiration. As, on the one hand, its various members looked upon the literal sense of the Holy Scriptures as the meaning directly and primarily intended by God, and as, on the other hand, they could not but feel the force of the difficulties which Origen had accumulated against it,[5] they were led to admit conclusions from which they would instinctively have shrunk otherwise. This accounts to a large extent for the fact that the most illustrious writer among them, St. John Chrysostom, though speaking of the mouth of the prophets as the mouth of God,

[1] Comm. in Joan., tom. x.

[2] Cfr. Pref. to Comm. on Romans. In his Homily xiii on St. John he says: "Joannes, ceu sermone rudis, obscure scripsit quod mente conceperat."

[3] Pref. to Comm. on St. John, § 5.

[4] On St. Luke, Homil. xvii; on Jerem., Homil. xxi.

[5] It is this force of Origen's difficulties against the historical sense which induced St. Ambrose to say: "Ostendit hic locus, quæ propter fragilitatem humanam scripta sunt, non a Deo scripta" (On St. Luke, Book VIII, §§ 7, 8).

and of the words of the Apostles as the words of the Holy Ghost,[1] adopts, nevertheless, such views as the following: (1) the Gospel narratives disagree in details of minor importance, and this disagreement is a proof of the reliability of the Evangelists, inasmuch as if they all perfectly agreed in everything, adversaries could suspect them of collusion;[2] (2) "occasionally St. Paul speaks in a manner which is human, and he does not always enjoy grace, but is allowed to set forth something of his own."[3]

Views similar to those of St. Chrysostom were probably held by Theodore of Mopsuestia, Junilius Africanus, Theodoret, St. Methodius, St. Cyril of Jerusalem, and St. Epiphanius, who belonged to the Antiochian school, while several other Fathers show clearly the influence of that great school. Among these may be mentioned the Alexandrian scholars, Didymus and St. Cyril, and, in a particular manner, the illustrious Cappadocian writer, St. Basil of Cæsarea. In various places the last-named Father refers indeed the style and words of the sacred books to the influence of the Holy Spirit. Yet in his *Treatise against Eunomius* he lays it down as a proof of the divinity of the Holy Ghost that He differs from "the sacred writers who sometimes speak of themselves (i.e., their own thought), sometimes express what God inspires them with."[4]

Belonging to neither of the two great schools of Alexandria and Antioch, yet influenced by both, stands St. Jerome, the greatest Biblical scholar of the Western Church. The influence of Origen and his school may be seen from the manner in which Jerome speaks of the words, syllables, and other minute details of the sacred text, and also from his allegorical interpretation of many passages of the Holy Scriptures. Greater, however, was the influence which the Antiochian school exer-

[1] Homil. xix, in Act. Apost.; Homil. i, in Joann.; Homil. in I Tim. v, 23.
[2] Homil. i, in Matt., § 2.
[3] Homil. xlix on the Acts of the Apostles, § 1.
[4] Adv. Eunomium, Book v, § 3d before the end.

cised upon the solitary of Bethlehem. Thus he declares himself in favor of the historico-grammatical method of interpretation, and recognizes openly the characteristic literary features and other peculiarities of the sacred writers. If he belonged to the Antiochian school he would hardly speak more freely of Biblical Inspiration than he does in the following passages: "Multa in Scripturis dicuntur, juxta, opinionem illius temporis, quo gesta referuntur, et non juxta quod rei veritas continebat";[1] "Reperi loca, in quibus scripta sunt quæ videntur facere qæustionem. Ac primo ætimabam indissolubilia esse, *sicut et multa sunt alia*."[2] Elsewhere he says: "Quid prodest hærere in littera, et vel scriptoris errorem vel annorum seriem calumniari, cum manifestissime scribatur: littera occidit, spiritus autem vivificat?"[3] In another passage[4] he seems to admit with St. Basil and St. John Chrysostom that St. Paul was allowed to give vent to a human feeling. Finally, in his commentary on the prophet Micheas (chap. v, verse 2) he relates without condemning the view of those who ascribe to failings of the memory of the Apostles or Evangelists the changes even as to the sense which are observable between the passage in the Old Testament and the quotation made of it in the New.[5]

It was that freedom of St. Jerome in treating Biblical statements which led St. Augustine to write to him these significant words: "But I have learned to hold the books of the Canonical Scriptures in such reverence and high esteem as to firmly believe that no one of their authors has fallen into any error." In point of fact, the illustrious Bishop of Hippo, in using these words, was but drawing a natural inference from

[1] Comm. in Jerem., Liber v, cap. xxviii, vers. 10. 11. MIGNE, Patr. Lat., vol. xxiv, col. 855. It will be noticed that St. Jerome directly refers to *historical* statements in Holy Writ.

[2] Epist. to St. Damasus (Epist. xxxvi), § 10, Migne, P. L., vol. xxii, col. 456.

[3] Epist. to Vitalis (Epist. lxii), § 5, Migne, ibid., col. 676.

[4] Comment. in Galat., lib. iii, cap. v, verse 12 (Migne, vol. xxvi, col. 405).

[5] Comm. in Michæam, Migne, Patr. Lat., vol. xxv, col. 1197.

his view that the Scriptures are "divine," "holy," a "chirographum Dei," "venerabilis stylus Spiritus Sancti," written by the members of Christ "dictante capite," "God speaking to them or through them," etc., etc. In these and in many similar statements the holy Doctor seems to refer so entirely the writing of the sacred books to the divine action that one is surprised when one finds him recognizing a large human element in the composition of the Holy Scriptures.[1] He distinctly admits that the memory of St. Matthew supplied him wrongly with the name of Jeremias, in quoting a passage of Zachary, and explains how his error was allowed by the Holy Spirit.[2] The general "reason which he gives for the discrepancies found in Holy Writ lies in the action of the writers, which action he allows to have been influenced by the scope and tendency of their writings."[3] Thus he says: "Ut quisque meminerat, et ut cuique cordi erat vel brevius vel prolixius, eamdem tamen explicare sententiam, ita eos explicare manifestum est";[4] and again in his Comm. on St. John[5] he writes: "Audeo dicere forsitan nec ipse Joannes dixit, ut est, sed ut potuit, quia de Deo homo dixit. Et quidem inspiratus a Deo, sed tamen homo."

**3. The Middle Ages.** As time went on, the difficulties raised or emphasized by Origen against the literal sense of Holy Writ gradually ceased to engage seriously the attention of Christian scholars, and the theories which the Antiochian or other Fathers had framed to meet them were proportionately forgotten.[6]

It is not, therefore, surprising to find that, in the twelfth cen-

[1] Cfr. De Consensu Evangelistarum, Book ii, § 28 (Migne, Patr. Lat., vol. xxxiv, col. 1091).

[2] De Consensu Evangel., Book III, chap. vii, pp. 20, 30 (Migne, ibid., cols. 1174, 1175). Cfr. also editorial note in Migne, P. L., vol. xxvi, col. 205, footn. c.

[3] P. Schanz, A Christian Apology, vol. ii, p. 425 (Engl. Transl., 2d edit.).

[4] Cfr. Migne, P. L., vol. xxxiv, col. 1090.

[5] In Joannem, Tract. 1, § 1.

[6] Barely a trace of them is found in Agobard and Euthymius Zigabenus.

tury, that is, in the course of the Middle Ages, the ancient difficulties connected with the human element in the composition of the Canonical Books had been forgotten. The *Decretum Gratiani*, completed about the middle of that century, quotes only the passages of St. Augustine which contain the strongest expression of his belief in the absolute reliability of the Scriptures.[1] St. Anselm († 1109), Peter Lombard († 1164), St. Thomas Aquinas († 1274),[2] and St. Bonaventura († 1274) have no doubt about the full inspiration of Holy Writ. It seems, however, that Hugo of St. Victor, a great mystical writer of that period, confused the divine element in Holy Writ with the supernatural divine guidance enjoyed by saintly men here below, and admitted that the author of Ecclesiastes drew from his own resources.[3] More incorrect still than this opinion of Hugo of St. Victor was that entertained by Abailard when he affirmed that "the prophets and Apostles had many times mistaken their own conceptions for the voice of God, and wrongly considered themselves as inspired," quoting Galat. ii, 11 sqq., in support of his assertion. But the opinions of Abailard and Hugo of St. Victor were only their individual views, and the bulk of Christian scholars maintained unhesitatingly the divine character and absolute reliability of Holy Scripture, in the sense in which they were then embodied in the dogmatic formula: "Deus est auctor Scripturæ."[4] Whatever difficulties might have been suggested against these positions by the study of the literal sense either escaped the attention of Catholic interpreters, or were easily bridged over by appeals to the typical or allegorical sense.[5]

[1] Migne, Patr. Lat., vol. clxxxvii, cols. 49, 50.

[2] St. Thomas admits that the divine illumination which preserved the sacred writers from error did not interfere with the normal use of their natural powers. For a full study of St. Thomas's doctrine, see DAUSCH, Schriftinspiration, pp. 93–97.

[3] Cfr. A. MIGNON, Les Origines de la Scolastique et Hugues de St. Victor, vol. i, p. 212; HAGENBACH, Hist. of Christian Doctrines, § 161.

[4] Cfr. DAUSCH, loc. cit., pp. 102, 103.

[5] For the views of Jewish rabbis regarding inspiration during the Middle Ages,

## § 4. *Third Period: Biblical Inspiration Since the Sixteenth Century.*

**1. Outside the Church.** As the Protestant Reformation was started on the basis of the supremacy of the sacred books, it might have been expected that its first leaders would hold the strictest views concerning Biblical Inspiration. In point of fact, the foremost among them, Luther, declares that he looks upon the Bible "as if God Himself spoke therein," that it is "a queen, alone worthy to issue orders to be obeyed by all," that "one of its letters or titles is worth far more than heaven and earth," that God spoke with an "audible voice" and the Holy Scriptures transmit and preserve His words, etc. Yet, inconsistently with these statements, he freely charges the sacred writers with inaccurate statements, unsound reasonings, the use of imperfect materials, and even urges the authority of Christ against that of Holy Writ.[1] In a word, as is admitted by a recent Protestant writer: "Luther has no fixed theory of inspiration; if all his works suppose the inspiration of the sacred writings, all his conduct shows that he makes himself the supreme judge of it." [2]

Zwingli and Calvin maintained as firmly as Luther the supremacy of the Bible, while also keeping a considerable freedom of thought as to its various parts. The former spoke of Holy Writ as "pelagus immensum et impermeabile, a nullo adhuc pro dignitate emensum," and yet affirmed that the inner word of God in our heart enables us to judge of the outward divine word in the Bible, and that this outward word is not free from errors in detail, though perfect in matters essential.[3] According to Calvin: "God Himself speaks in Scriptures, so that the doctrine therein contained is heavenly." [4] He nevertheless openly acknowledges inaccuracies of detail in the Biblical narratives, and says that "they do not trouble him much." [5]

see L. Wogue, Histoire de la Bible et de l'Exégèse Biblique, pp. 208–296; Encyclopædia Britannica, art. Inspiration; Dausch, loc. cit., p. 104 sq.; etc.

[1] For references to the works of Luther, cfr. F. Lichtenberger, Encyclopédie des Sciences Religieuses, vol. xii, art. Théopneustie; Edouard Rabaud, Histoire de la Doctrine de l'Inspiration, pp. 34–40; Ladd, The Doctrine of Sacred Scripture, vol. ii, p. 165 sq.

[2] E. Rabaud, loc. cit., p. 42.

[3] Cfr. Lichtenberger, loc. cit., p. 106.

[4] Institutes of the Christian Religion, Book i, chap. vii, § 1.

[5] Comm. on Epist. to the Hebrews, xi, 21.

In like manner Carlstadt in his *Libellus de Canonicis Scripturis* recognizes the fallibility of the Bible, while maintaining the Protestant doctrine of the supremacy of Holy Writ; and the same general spirit prevails through the works of Melanchthon, Brenz, Bullinger, Bugenhagen, etc., and other immediate followers of the early reformers.

It must be granted that the position thus assumed by the founders of Protestantism was rather awkward, for there was an almost palpable inconsistency in asserting on the one hand that the Bible was the supreme rule of Christian belief, and on the other hand that it contained errors. The awkwardness was apparently felt very early, for the earlier and greater of the Protestant *Symbols* speak of the inspiration of Holy Writ only in cautious and general terms, stating simply that "all things necessary to salvation, both as regards faith and morals, may be derived from the Bible, and can be authoritatively derived only from this source." [1] But this awkwardness soon disappeared. For polemical purposes Protestant divines soon felt it necessary to oppose to the Catholic doctrine of an infallible Church the claim of an infallible Bible, as a secure basis for their tenets. They, therefore, gave up the laxer views of inspiration which had been advanced by the early reformers, and were, in fact, gradually betrayed "into the farthest extreme of the pre-Christian theory" of the Alexandrian Philo. At first Flacius Illyricus († 1575) denied that the sacred narratives contained contradictions of detail. Next, Calovius († 1688)—the author of what is called the *Orthodox* Protestant theory of inspiration—claimed that inspiration is the form which Revelation assumes, and that every statement of Holy Writ was divinely suggested and inspired.[2] Quenstedt († 1688), Baier († 1694), and Hollaz († 1713) went farther, and affirmed that the writers were dependent upon the Spirit for their very words, and that there are no solecisms in the Scripture. The Buxtorfs, Gerhard, and Heidegger extended inspiration to the vowel-points of the Hebrew Text; [3] and Gisbert Voetius to the very punctuation.

[1] See in SCHAFF, Creeds of Christendom, vol. iii, the *Gallic* Confession, art. 5; the *Belgic* Confession, art. 7; the *Scotch* Confession, art. 18; the *Westminster* Confession, chap. i, § 6; the *Thirty-nine Articles* of the Church of England, art. 6.

[2] This theory was embodied in the *Consensus Repetitus fidei veræ Lutheranæ*.

[3] This view was adopted in the *Formula Consensus Helvetici*, the text of which is found in HAGENBACH, History of Christian Doctrines, vol. iii, p. 61 sq. (Engl. Transl.).

Moreover, while the idea of inspiration was thus gradually made to reach everything in the text, the sacred writers were proportionately reduced to passive instruments, to whom nothing was left but mechanical activity in apprehending the words containing the matter, and in writing.

Side by side with this, and opposed to it, ran a second current of Protestant thought likewise traceable to views entertained by the early reformers regarding inspiration. Their admission of errors in the sacred books was repeated by L. Socinus († 1562) and Castalio († 1563). It was also adopted by such Arminians as Episcopius († 1643), Grotius († 1645), and Clericus († 1736), and practically endorsed by the Pietist, J. Bengel († 1752), who exhorted Christians to feed on the bread of life (i.e., on Holy Writ) without bothering about some extraneous matter which may be mixed with the wheat. Meanwhile Textual Criticism showed conclusively that the extreme conservative school was wrong in claiming an immediate divine origin for the Hebrew vowel-points, and for all the more or less irregular forms found in the Greek Text of the New Testament. The reaction thus set in against the strict views of inspiration was powerfully helped along by the influence exerted upon the public mind by the works of the English deists, as well as by the rational methods advocated by Bacon, Descartes, and Wolf, and by the teaching of such men as Baumgarten († 1757) and Töllner († 1774), the great forerunners of Rationalism. Inspiration was indeed ascribed to Holy Writ by Baumgarten, but it was reduced to a minimum. Töllner went farther still, and admitted that some books were written without inspiration of any kind, and were only subsequently approved by divine sanction. In fact he rejected altogether the inspired character of the historical writings of the Old Testament, and of the book of the Acts, and said that the Gospels of St. Luke and St. Mark were simply approved by the Apostles.[1]

Thus was the way paved for the publication of the *Wolfenbüttel Fragments*, in which Reimarus, their author, represents the Bible as abounding in errors as to matters of fact, and in statements at variance with human experience, reason, and morality. Thus, also, was the ground prepared for the scientific efforts of Semler to put on a solid basis the views of Rationalism which had long been everywhere, so to speak, in the air;

[1] HURST, History of Rationalism, p. 201 sq.

and it must be said that, under his influence, the cause of Rationalism seemed practically won in Germany.

Ever since Semler's time, the Rationalistic view which looks upon the Bible as a book merely human in its origin has been widely entertained by German scholars, in spite of the Creeds or Confessions of the sects to which they belonged, and the same holds good, though not to the same extent, as regards prominent Protestant writers of France, Great Britain, and America.

Thus, side by side with the old *Confessional* theory or *Mechanical* or *Dictation* theory of inspiration, which regards the sacred writers as hardly more than machines writing what was suggested to them by the Holy Spirit in the very act of writing, four principal theories, more or less Rationalistic in their tenor, are widely accepted in Protestant circles. The first, which may be called the theory of *Natural* inspiration, admits that there are errors of detail in the Canonical Books, and that, strictly speaking, their authors should not be called inspired, except in the sense in which Milton, Shakespeare, Homer, Plato, Socrates, etc., can be looked upon as inspired. The best-known partisans of this thorough-going Rationalistic view in the nineteenth century are Kuenen in Holland, Ewald in Germany, F. W. Newman in England, and Theodore Parker in America.

A second theory, which reminds one of the opinion advanced in the Middle Ages by Hugo of St. Victor, though it has more of a Rationalistic tinge about it, identifies the inspiration of Holy Writ with the illumination common to every believer. This is, in substance, the theory endorsed by Schleiermacher († 1834), Neander († 1850), Farrar, Maurice, and F. W. Robertson.

The third leading opinion, which bears the name of *Partial* inspiration theory, limits inspiration to certain parts of the Bible; either to the doctrine, or to special revelations, or to things naturally unknown to the writer, or to the ideas in general. This view, held by Paley († 1805) and Horne († 1862), was regarded in 1863 by the British Privy Council as sufficiently in harmony with the XXXIX Articles of the Church of England. Its watchword is, "The Bible *contains* the Word of God," as against the formula, "The Bible *is* the Word of God." One of its best-known propounders in America is George T. Ladd, particularly in his work entitled *The Doctrine of Sacred Scriptures.*

Lastly, the fourth opinion, which has been called the *Illumination* theory, maintains that the Bible is not equally inspired in all its parts, and that *four* degrees of divine influence at least should be recognized. These are called (1) Inspiration of *Direction;* (2) Inspiration of *Superintendency;* (3) Inspiration of *Elevation;* (4) Inspiration of *Suggestion*, according to the degree of illumination and guidance bestowed by God upon the sacred writers. In the lower degrees, those who hold this view think there is ample room for imperfection and error. This is apparently the position assumed by Dorner († 1884) in Germany, and by Briggs, H. P. Smith, and other scholars recently tried for heresy by American Presbyteries.

**2. Within the Catholic Church.** While Protestant scholars, applying their great principle of *Private Judgment*, and following out the views of the early reformers, were led in large numbers to deny to the Bible all divine authority, Catholic writers, guided by the voice of tradition, always maintained the inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. As already stated, the teaching of tradition had been embodied during the Middle Ages in the theological formula, "Deus est auctor Scripturæ," and it is this formula that "the Roman Church" solemnly made her own in the Council of Florence (in 1431), when she declared that "she believes most firmly . . . in one and the same God as the author of the Old and New Testaments . . . because the same Holy Spirit spoke through the holy men of both Testaments."[1] As, however, on the one hand, the Council of Florence had not expressly defined the extent of inspiration, and as, on the other hand, the decree *pro Jacobitis*, had been apparently framed only for the instruction of those to whom it was directed, there were Catholic scholars who considered themselves free to admit the existence of minor errors in the sacred books, as several Fathers had done before. This was the case with Erasmus († 1536), who in his Commentary on St. Matthew (chap. ii) says in addition to a similar remark of

[1] Decretum pro Jacobitis, sive Bulla Eugenii IV "Cantate Domino." Cfr DENZINGER, Enchiridion Symbolorum et Definitionum, n. 600.

St. Jerome: "It may be that the Evangelists did not extract their quotations directly from the sacred books, but trusted to their memory, and thus fell into error. Christ alone is called the Truth; He alone was free from all error." This was also the case with A. Pighius, S.J., who, in his *Assertio Ecclesiasticæ Hierarchiæ*, went so far as to say that "lapses of memory and false statements may be attributed to the Evangelists Matthew and John." [1]

This was even the case with numerous Catholic scholars who wrote after the Council of Trent, because in that Council (4th session, April 8, 1546) the formula of Florence bearing directly on the inspiration of the sacred books had been repeated without further explanation concerning the extent of Biblical Inspiration.

It is true that immediately after the Council of Trent theologians and commentators generally—among whom may be mentioned Salmeron († 1585), Maldonatus († 1583), Bannez († 1604), Estius († 1613), Suarez († 1617), etc.—maintained that the divine influence extended to the style and words employed by the sacred writers. But even before the end of the sixteenth century somewhat freer views of inspiration began to be entertained by Catholic scholars. In 1585 the Jesuits Lessius and Hamelius (du Hamel), both professors in Louvain, set forth the three following propositions: (1) Ut aliquid sit Scriptura sacra, non est necessarium singula ejus verba inspirata esse a Spiritu Sancto; (2) Non est necessarium ut singulæ veritates et sententiæ sint immediate a Spiritu Sancto ipsi scriptori inspiratæ; (3) Liber aliquis, qualis est fortasse secundus Machabæorum, humana industria sine assistentia Spiritus Sancti scriptus, si Spiritus Sanctus postea testetur ibi nihil esse falsum, efficitur Scriptura sacra. In thus speaking

[1] "Matthæus et Joannes evangelistæ potuerunt labi memoria et mentiri." (Assertio Eccl. Hier. I, 2, Cologne, 1538.) Likewise Bened. Pereira (Comm. in Rom.) and Gordon Huntläus (Controv. lib. iii, 4) are referred to by Dausch (loc. cit., p. 175, footn. 4), as denying the special inspiration of St. Luke.

they went against the most common view of their time, and therefore naturally drew upon themselves the censure of the celebrated University of Louvain. As, however, the censure directed against them was not upheld either by the University of Paris or by the Roman authorities, the positions they had assumed—especially after the third proposition had been somewhat modified—rapidly gained ground, and were accepted not only by the Jesuits Bellarmin († 1621), Mariana († 1623), Bonfrère († 1642), and Cornelius à Lapide († 1657), but also by such independent scholars as Contenson († 1674), Rich. Simon († 1712), Ellies Dupin († 1719), Dom Calmet († 1757), and in the nineteenth century by Movers († 1856), Hanneberg († 1876), and many others.

In so far as the Louvain professors offered a new interpretation of the formula, "Deus est auctor Scripturæ," they may be considered as the starting-point of other constructions of a less guarded character which were soon put upon the same formula. Thus Holden († 1665), an English doctor of Sorbonne, declared that God is indeed the author of Holy Writ, but that He is not the author of all its parts in the same manner: in parts containing statements which may be matters of our faith He granted a special help, which by its very nature preserved the writer from error; in other parts the general influence which God exercises upon very pious authors was deemed sufficient by Holden to make them "God's Word," though it did not necessarily imply the inerrancy of the writer.[1] This was indeed a bold position to assume; yet since Holden distinctly affirmed the *de facto* inerrancy of the sacred writers, his view, though sharply criticised by many, was allowed to pass uncensured. The possibility of mistakes in Holy Writ, which the English doctor had admitted with a view to answer more easily the difficulties raised against the Holy Scriptures, was

[1] Holden's exact words are quoted in unabridged "General Introduction," p. 507.

adopted for the same reason by several prominent scholars after him. This was the case with Amort († 1775), Feilmoser († 1831), Chrismann († 1792), and apparently also Archbishop Dixon († 1866), and Fr. Matignon.

The next step taken by several Catholic writers brought them back to the position which Erasmus, Pighius, and others had assumed before the Council of Trent. In presence of the new difficulties, historical, geographical, scientific, etc., urged against statements found in the Bible, Frenchmen like the Abbé Le Noir († 1860) and François Lenormant († 1883), Germans like Langen and Reusch, etc., were led to deny the infallible character of the Biblical statements which have not an immediate bearing upon faith and morals. However venturesome, these views do not seem to have been expressly condemned by the Council of the Vatican, any more than those of Erasmus, Pighius, etc., had been by the Council of Trent. The Vatican decree concerning the inspiration of Holy Writ reads as follows: "Si quis sacræ Scripturæ libros integros cum omnibus suis partibus, prout illos Sancta Tridentina Synodus recensuit, pro sacris et canonicis non susceperit, aut eos *divinitus inspiratos* esse negaverit, A.S." [1] This Canon repeats and confirms the decision of Trent regarding the "sacred and canonical character" of all the books of Holy Writ, and adds to it an explicit definition of their *divine inspiration* against modern Rationalists. But it does not apparently condemn views of Catholic scholars as regards the extent of divine inspiration.[2] For, as rightly said by Prof. Schanz: "It lay outside the scope of the Council to determine *how* we are to conceive the inspiration in the Apostolic authors." [3]

Hence it is that after, as before, the Vatican Council, Cath-

[1] Concil. Vat. *Canones*. II. De Revelatione, Can. iv.

[2] The only pronouncement of the Vatican Council in this connection is found in chap. ii of the dogmatic constitution "Dei Filius," which precedes the Canons of the same Council. It has no direct reference to the *extent* of Biblical Inspiration (cfr. unabridged "General Introduction," p. 509).

[3] SCHANZ, A Christian Apology, vol. ii, p. 440 (Engl. Transl.).

olic scholars deemed themselves free to investigate the question as to the *extent* of inspiration. As early as 1872, Rohling seemed to maintain that inspiration should be restricted to matters of faith and morals, and Fr. Lenormant distinctly held that position in 1880. A few years later (1884) Card. Newman († 1890) published an article[1] the purpose of which was to state "what we (Catholics) really do hold as regards Holy Scripture, and what a Catholic is bound to believe." According to the learned Cardinal, "the Canonical Books cannot be regarded as inspired in every respect, unless we are bound *de fide* to believe that 'terra in æternum stat,' and that heaven is above us, and that there are no antipodes. And it seems unworthy of divine greatness that the Almighty should in His revelation of Himself to us undertake mere secular duties, and assume the office of a narrator, as such, or an historian, or geographer, except so far as the secular matters bear directly upon the revealed truth. The Councils of Trent and the Vatican fulfil this anticipation; they tell us distinctly the object and the promise of Scripture Inspiration. They specify 'faith and moral conduct' as the drift of that teaching which has the guarantee of inspiration." Again, he speaks of the solemn "duty" incumbent upon "the Catholic scholar or man of science . . . never to forget that what he is handling is the Word of God, which, by reason of the difficulty of always drawing the line between what is human and what is divine, cannot be put on the level of other books. . . ."[2] A little farther he ascribes to the human writers, and not to God, the *obiter dicta* (i.e., unimportant statements, accessory details, etc.), as, for instance, what is said of the dog of Tobias,[3] St. Paul's *penula*,[4] and the salutations at the end of the epistles, remarking that neither Fr. Patrizi († 1881) nor Prof. Lamy dares to censure such a view.

[1] This article appeared in The Nineteenth Century for February, 1884 and was reprinted by Fr. PRICE in "Truth" (March, 1902), pp. 429–437.

[2] The Nineteenth Century, loc. cit., p. 192.

[3] Tobias xii, 9.

[4] II Tim. iv, 13.

"This practical exception to the ideal continuity of inspiration," as Newman calls it, was admitted a few months later by an American writer, Fr. Walworth, in his article on "The Nature and Extent of Inspiration,"[1] and apparently also by Abbé de Broglie († 1895) and by other Catholic scholars. "Even in many theological seminaries," writes "La Controverse,"[2] "students were taught as a probable theory that perhaps the historical books (Kings, Paralipomenon, Judges, etc.) are inspired and free from error only in their dogmatic and moral parts."

Views of a similar kind were expressed by the Canon Salvatore di Bartolo, in his work, *I Criterî Teologici*, where, after distinguishing several degrees in Biblical Inspiration, he maintains that in passages which do not bear directly on faith or morals, or are not essentially connected therewith, divine inspiration exists only in an inferior degree which does not necessarily secure inerrancy. This was done also by Jules Didiot, one of the best-known professors of the Catholic Institute of Lille (France), and finally, though not so freely, by Mgr. d'Hulst († 1896), the eminent Rector of the Catholic Institute of Paris.[3]

While these more or less extreme views were extensively circulated, almost all the leading theologians (such, for instance, as Franzelin († 1886), Fr. Schmid, Mazella († 1900), Berthier, Pesch, etc.), who treated of Scriptural Inspiration *ex professo*, and "from the safe harbor of dogmatic theology"[4] endeavored to set forth a satisfactory analysis of the formulas used by the Vatican Council: "God is the author of Scripture," "Spiritu Sancto inspirante, conscripti sunt libri canonici." This led them to define inspiration as a "motio Dei

[1] The Catholic World, Oct. 1884.

[2] March, 1886. "La Controverse" is one of the leading Catholic magazines of France.

[3] "La Question Biblique," an article published in "Le Correspondant," January, 1893.

[4] "Vom sichern Port der Dogmatik" (DAUSCH, loc. cit., p. 178).

in scriptorem sacrum qua Deus est proprie auctor libri sacri," and to consider it as implying three things: (1) a divine impulse prompting the author to write; (2) a special illumination imparted to his mind, and supplying not indeed the words, but the thoughts to be written down; (3) an assistance enabling the writer to set forth only, but yet entirely, the divine message. Others, however, among whom may be mentioned Ch. de Smedt, S.J., and Corluy, S.J., though maintaining the complete inerrancy of Holy Writ, seemed at times inclined to make concessions to those who held a different view. The former quotes approvingly the words of St. Jerome we have already cited: "Multa in Scripturis Sanctis dicuntur juxta opinionem illius temporis quo gesta referuntur, et non juxta quod rei veritas continebat";[1] the latter admits [2] that St. Paul, writing under inspiration, "realized only imperfectly the thought of God, and hence intended to affirm in some passages of his epistles that he and his readers would be really among the living" at the time of Christ's second coming.

However this may be, it is at this juncture that the Holy See judged it advisable to reaffirm the traditional teaching of the Church regarding Biblical Inspiration. A few months after Mgr. d'Hulst's article mentioned above, Pope Leo XIII. issued his Encyclical letter *Providentissimus Deus*,[3] on "The Study of Holy Scripture." In this remarkable document the Sovereign Pontiff proclaims with St. Augustine that "the Holy Ghost, who spoke by the sacred writers, did not intend to teach men these things (i.e., the intimate nature of things visible), things in no way profitable unto salvation," and with the Angelic Doctor that the sacred writers "went by what sensibly appeared," or put down what God, speaking

[1] Principes de la Critique Historique (Liège, 1883).

[2] Corluy, art. Fin du monde, in Jaugey, Diction. Apologétique de la Foi Catholique, col. 1280.

[3] It is dated November 18, 1893.

to men, signified in the way men could understand and were accustomed to. Soon after these remarks the Pope says: "hæc ipsa deinde ad cognatas disciplinas, ad historiam præsertim, juvabit transferri"; after which he proceeds solemnly to declare that "it is absolutely wrong either to narrow inspiration to certain parts of Holy Scripture, or to admit that the sacred writer has erred. . . . So far is it from being possible that any error can coexist with inspiration, that inspiration not only excludes every error, but excludes and rejects it as necessarily as it is impossible that God Himself, the supreme Truth, can be the author of any untruth. A little farther still, the Holy Father describes inspiration as follows: "By supernatural power He (the Holy Ghost) so moved and impelled them to write—He was so present to them—that the things which He ordered, and those only, they, first, rightly understood, them they willed faithfully to write down, and finally expressed in apt words and with infallible truth. Otherwise it could not be said that He was the author of the entire Scripture. . . . Whence it follows that those who maintain that something false is found in any genuine passage of the sacred writings either pervert the Catholic notion of inspiration, or make God Himself the author of such error."

As might well be expected, this authoritative pronouncement of the Roman Pontiff made Catholic scholars at large more careful and precise in their statements regarding the inspiration of the sacred books. They all profess to reject error from the inspired writings, and explain in different ways how scientific and historical passages may be harmonized either with each other or with extraneous sources of information. Most appeal to St. Jerome's and St. Thomas's view mentioned in the *Encyclical* itself, to show how many Biblical statements, which, when taken absolutely, might be considered as erroneous, are really true when viewed properly—that is, as couched, not in scientific, but in popular

language, or as conforming to the opinions of the men for the immediate use of whom such inspired statements were intended. Others tell us that "when the sacred writers do not claim to write history or to write it as demanded by modern criticism, they cannot be accused of error if the representation does not correspond to the standard of severely historical science."[1] Others, again, bid us remember that the inspired books, embodying traditions with their varying accounts of the details of one and the same fact, may be conceived as exhibiting a more accurate record of that event than others.[2] But in whatever way they manage to show the accuracy of Holy Scripture, they, each and all, profess their belief (1) in the inspiration of all the genuine parts of the Canonical Books; (2) in the inerrancy of the sacred writings; while almost all admit this notion of inspiration: "that God is the chief author (*auctor principalis*), and that the writers are the instrumental, though rational, authors (*auctores instrumentales*)."[3]

[1] P. Schanz, quoted in Dublin Review, Oct. 1895, p. 296.

[2] "Quem eventum Matt. viii, 28–34, breviter narratum legimus in illa enumeratione miraculorum omnis generis qua Jesu potentiam nullis circumscribi limitibus docetur; quare Matthæus solum enarrat id quod ad miraculum spectat. Multo accuratius narrant alii duo (Synoptici). . . . Quæ omnia (all the differences the author points out) ex traditione facillime explicantur: aliter enim ab aliis idem eventus narrari solet" (Knabenbauer, S.J., Comm. in Evangelium secundum Lucam, p. 289, Paris, 1896.)

[3] Schanz, A Christian Apology, vol. ii, p. 440 (Engl. Transl., New York, 1896). Cfr. also the valuable articles of Father Lagrange, O.P., on Inspiration, in La Revue Biblique Internationale, for 1896, pp. 199–220, 496–518.

## SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTER XVI.

### The Proofs of Biblical Inspiration.

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**I. Arguments put forward by Protestants.**

1. Great importance for Protestants to prove the Inspiration of the Bible.
2. Arguments drawn from
   - The inspiring and elevating character of Holy Writ.
   - The superhuman structure and contents of the Bible.
   - Its organic unity joined to the admittedly divine origin of many of its component parts.
3. Appeals to the Authority
   - Of Christ and the Apostles.
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**II. Proofs set forth by Catholics.**

1. Grounds common to them and to Protestants.
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## CHAPTER XVI.

### THE PROOFS OF BIBLICAL INSPIRATION.

#### § 1. *Arguments put forward by Protestants.*

**1. Great Importance for Protestants to Prove the Inspiration of the Bible.** Before proceeding to state the proofs upon which Catholics rest their belief in the inspired character of the Bible, it may not be amiss to explain and examine the position of Protestants in that regard. The importance of the question for the latter cannot be exaggerated. Catholics build their faith primarily on the teaching of a living Church, whereas Protestants rest their whole belief on the written Word of God. They have, therefore, to establish by irresistible arguments the divine character of the sacred books of the Old and New Testaments. A difficult task, at which the ablest minds among them have assiduously labored, but with results far from satisfactory, as we shall see presently, and as, in fact, some of the most enlightened Protestants candidly confess.

In dealing with this topic, the interest of which has been revived by recent controversies among Protestants, we shall not come back on the altogether subjective criteria of inspiration which were put forward by Luther, Calvin, and other early reformers, and which, as we stated in the History of the Canon, soon proved useless in theory and in practice, as means to determine which books should be regarded as the Word of God. But we shall relate, mostly in the words

of their best exponents, the principal arguments advanced by contemporary Protestant scholars, and simply subjoin a few remarks concerning their respective proving force.

**2. Critical Arguments put forward by Protestants.** Of the many evidences which Protestants have of late set forth in favor of Biblical Inspiration, some have been called *critical*, because they are based exclusively on an examination of the features exhibited by the sacred books themselves.

There is first of all the argument drawn from their *inspiring* and *elevating* character.

"The whole drift of the Bible," writes H. Ward Beecher,[1] "is to be a practical book —a book to teach men the highest way of life; . . . to teach them how to live in this world so that they shall come to a higher and better one. If there ever was a book the aim of whose teaching was that the man of God might be thoroughly furnished unto every good work, that book is the Bible."

This same characteristic of the sacred writings is more directly presented by James Paterson Smyth, another Protestant scholar, as an argument to prove their inspiration, in the following terms:

"As my study of the Bible continues, there seems borne in on me the conviction that the Book has a mysterious power of rousing men to grander, nobler lives; that the study of it tends powerfully to deepen the sense of sin and arouse the desire of righteousness. . . .[2] Its words have moved them deeply; it has helped them to be good; it has mastered their wills and gladdened their hearts till the overpowering conviction has forced itself upon them: Never book spake like this Book.

"Need I point you to the world around, to the miraculous power which is exercised by the Bible, to the evil lives reformed by it, to the noble, beautiful lives daily nourished by it? . . .

[1] Bible Studies, chap. i, The Inspiration of the Bible, p. 14.

[2] How God Inspired the Bible, p. 65.

You can see the amount of happiness and good that has come to the world even from the miserably imperfect following of it. You can see that the world would be a very paradise of God if it were thoroughly followed. . . . The Book whose tendency is thus to reproduce heaven we may fairly judge to be of heavenly birth. The Book whose beautiful ideals no man, no nation, has ever yet attained, is surely not of human growth." [1]

To strengthen this argument, Protestant writers bid us contemplate the numerous beneficial effects of the Bible upon society at large: how it has been a powerful source of progress to those nations it has enlightened, guided, and raised far above the great historical nations of heathendom, how much its doctrines and precepts, "resting upon the highest sanction and enforced by the strongest motives, have contributed to effect the regeneration of man, both individually and socially, their power under the agency of the Holy Spirit arising from their adaptation to meet our moral and spiritual wants"; [2] how "states cannot without Christianity accomplish their aim of securing, consistently with the general welfare, the greatest amount of temporal good to each individual," . . . for "where the religion of Christ does not prevail government generally becomes a system of organized oppression . . ."; [3] finally, "the most polished nations now in existence are indebted to it (the Bible) for the preservation and diffusion of literature and of the fine arts. It is interwoven with the finest productions of the human mind; it forms the inspiration of the loftiest poetry, and pervades the highest productions of genius." [4]

Such in mere outline is the argument drawn from the inspiring and elevating character of the inspired volume. It has been presented in very striking terms by some of the most eloquent Catholic and Protestant speakers and writers of the nineteenth century, and has no doubt contributed to confirm

[1] How God Inspired the Bible, p. 37 sq.
[2] Chas. Elliott, Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, p. 155.
[3] Ibid., p. 159.
[4] Ibid., p. 160 sq.

the belief in the divine character of the Bible in numerous souls which Rationalistic Criticism had caused to waver in their faith. Far, therefore, be it from us to treat it slightingly, to deny, for instance, the great beneficial effects conferred by the written Word of God upon mankind. It seems, however, that in their desire to carry conviction into the minds of their hearers or readers some Christian apologists have unwittingly advanced, to prove the inspiration of the Bible from its elevating character, much which is due directly not to Holy Scripture, but to the preaching of the Christian religion, and consequently should be used rather as a proof of the divinity of Christianity than of that of its sacred records. This is the case, for instance, with the writer just quoted, who speaks "of the religion of Christ" as necessary to secure wise government, material progress, etc.

Nor do we intend to deny the inspiring and ennobling influence of Holy Writ upon individual souls by directing their attention to God, and the things of God, by supplying them with salutary warnings against evil, and sublime motives for well doing, yet it may be doubted whether this influence is so deep, so universal, so necessary as to form a conclusive proof of the inspired character of *all* the Canonical Books. Even supposing that such would be the case in connection with the books of the New Testament, the Apocalypse itself included, it seems doubtful whether such a view could be held as to all the writings of the old Covenant, the Canticle of Canticles not excepted. Protestant readers of the Bible are oftentimes shocked by the perusal of the last-named book, and of not a few passages in other books, so that they are far from deriving from them the great spiritual benefit which would lead them to recognize, as it were, the breath of the Spirit of God in those writings. They continue, it is true, to regard them as inspired, but it is *in spite of* such an unfavorable impression, and because of a reason very different from the inspiring and elevating

character of these parts of the Bible: they were formerly taught to look upon the whole Bible as the Word of God; they admitted this belief on the *authority* of their parents or teachers, and they now wish to persevere in their belief. In point of fact, not so very long ago Goldwin Smith, in his able article entitled "Christianity's Millstone," [1] simply voiced the sentiment of many no less sceptical but less outspoken Protestant scholars as to the highly beneficial character of the writings of the Old Testament, when he advocated the giving up of the Old Testament bodily, as a burden too heavy for Christianity to carry.

A second argument—perhaps less subjective than the one just stated—in favor of the inspiration of the Bible is based on the *superhuman structure* and *contents* of the sacred books. The first part of this argument comes briefly to this: We discover such a wonderful harmony and intimate connection between all the parts of Scripture as to exclude "every dissent and contradiction," and as to propose the same invariable truth, flowing from the same fountain through different channels. And yet most of the Biblical writers lived at very different times, in distant places, through the long space of about 6000 years, were men of different education, faculties, and occupations, and varied in literary style, manner of illustration, etc., etc.

"Had the writers been under no peculiar influence, they would have reasoned and speculated like others, and their writings would have opposed each other. But if they were inspired,—if they all wrote and spoke under the influence of the same Spirit,—then is this harmony accounted for, and it is impossible to account for it upon any other principle. Hence we may conclude that all Scripture is not only genuine and authentic, but divinely inspired." [2]

[1] This article appeared in The North American Review, for December, 1895 (vol. 161, pp. 703–719).

[2] HORNE, An Introduction to the Critical Study and Knowledge of the Holy Scriptures, vol. i, p. 167 sq. (New York, Carter and Brothers, 1856).

In connection with this part of the second argument,—which has been put forward by several Protestant writers as a distinct argument in favor of Biblical Inspiration,—a few remarks may be made which go far to show how "this harmony and intimate connection subsisting between all the parts of Scripture" are not a conclusive proof "of its authority and divine original."[1] It seems, first of all, that several writers of either Testament are not really independent of each other, or at least of a common source. Again, the sacred books do not harmonize so readily and so perfectly as affirmed in the argument. It has never been an easy matter to harmonize the details in the Gospel narratives, and very few of the best scholars, ancient and modern, would go so far as to say that the harmony between the first three Gospels is so striking as to prove their divinely inspired character. Finally, as admitted by Protestant scholars, the discrepancies in Biblical History which have been emphasized so strongly in the nineteenth century, and so freely considered as positive errors by Protestant interpreters,[2] count for much among the causes of the great disquiet which prevails in Protestant communities regarding the very fact of inspiration,[3] so that it is difficult to see how "the wonderful harmony and connection subsisting between all the parts of Scripture are a proof of its divine authority and original."

The second part of the argument, which is oftener urged as a separate argument than the one just set forth—infers the inspiration of the Bible from the superhuman character of its *contents*. Those who rely on it implicitly point out as truly divine (1) the contents of Biblical history wherein "every-

[1] Horne, loc. cit., p. 167. Cfr. Chas. Elliott, The Inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, Part ii, chap. ii, p. 126 sqq.

[2] Cfr. Rooke, Lectures on Inspiration, p. 144, who declares that "it is foolish or, if not foolish, disingenuous to deny that such discrepancies (i.e., due to slips of memory, or other failings of the sacred writers) do attach to the comparison of passages in Holy Writ."

[3] Jas. P. Smyth, How God Inspired the Bible, p. 4.

thing is looked at in relation to God," wherein also "goodness seems the only thing of importance," while "the sole business of prophet, and historian, and lawgiver seems to be to rebuke men for sin and to incite them to holiness"; (2) " the national hymns and poems of the people, the greatest miracle in the whole of the world's history"; (3) "another peculiarity of the Book: it predicts the future and its predictions are fulfilled. What unaided sage or statesman can do that? 'Who as I,' says God, 'declareth the thing that shall be?' " [1]

It is quite true that in many ways the Bible appears superior to all other books. Yet it does not seem that this superiority is such as to strictly prove its divinely inspired character. Its "Godward aspect," as it is called by the writer just quoted, has its counterpart in confessedly uninspired books, such as the *De Civitate Dei* by St. Augustine, or *Le Discours sur l'Histoire Universelle* by Bossuet, or even in ancient Semitic inscriptions, such as the Moabite Stone, where everything also is directly referred to Chamos, Moab's God. An enthusiastic praise of earthly grandeur, of worldly splendor and riches and prosperity and aggrandizement, is found in connection with the glorious reigns of David and Solomon, and if more of the kind is not heard of in the Bible, one may well suppose that it is because the Biblical record of the various Jewish reigns is extremely short, or because these same reigns did not exhibit anything worthy of like praise. The sacred hymns of Israel are indeed beautiful lyrical compositions, yet they are not without their counterpart in certain Psalms, unquestionably not inspired, which are ascribed to Solomon. Again, the predictive element found in the Bible, though unquestionable, when closely examined is far from furnishing a clear evidence of Biblical Inspiration. Side by side with fulfilled prophecies, there are predictions the accomplishment of which has been, and still is, the matter of very serious controversy. And here

[1] J. P. Smyth, loc. cit., p. 26 sqq.

it must be remembered that a book containing true prophecies, that is, containing true revealed data, is not on that sole account an inspired book: to be really inspired, a book recording true predictions must have been composed in virtue of a divine commission to write, with a positive influence of God upon the writer.

The last critical argument to be stated and examined is chiefly derived from the *organic unity* prevailing throughout the Bible. It is well and briefly stated by a well-known Protestant writer[1] in the following terms:

"There is in the Bible, as a whole, a certain organic unity by which all its parts are bound together around the central figure of Christ. Preparation for Christ by type, prediction, and providential arrangement manifestly pervades every part of the Old Testament, and the New Testament is as manifestly devoted to an explanation of these features of the Old Testament. Yet no one can say that the preparation is of human design or origin, or that the correspondence between the two parts of the Bible and their meeting-point in the historical person of Christ is the result of deliberate human skill or artifice. It is either a marvellous piece of chance, or else one of the phenomena in which we are compelled to recognize the divine and supernatural element."

As a confirmation or continuation of this argument some Protestant writers appeal to the admittedly divine origin of many of the component parts of the Bible. "The Bible," they say in substance, "is an organic whole, whose character as a whole must be judged by the character of its principal parts. Now these principal parts—the sublime moral lessons which are inculcated, the revelations and prophecies which are recorded—are the inspired Word of God. Hence the Bible, taken as a whole and with all its parts, must be recognized as the inspired Word of God."

The argument drawn from the organic unity of the Bible

[1] Rooke, Lectures on Inspiration, p. 143 (Edinburgh, 1893). See also B. F. Westcott, The Bible in the Church, p. 14 sq.

is of all the *critical* arguments the one most in favor among recent Protestant scholars. The reason of this is that the existence of a certain unity in the Biblical writings cannot only be inductively established, it can also be set forth in a manner calculated to produce a deep impression upon religious minds. But however strikingly this organic unity of the sacred books may be described, it is beyond question that the argument based on it cannot be considered as a conclusive proof of Biblical Inspiration. On the one hand, it is difficult, not to say impossible, to assign to entire books, such as Esther, Ecclesiastes, etc., a real share in "the organic unity by which all the parts of the Bible" are said to be "bound together around the central figure of Christ." On the other hand, it looks strange indeed that such books as the books of the Machabees, which seem almost indispensable to the full scheme of Biblical History, and which are recognized as belonging to Holy Writ by the Greek and Latin churches, should be placed by Protestants outside the Canon of the Sacred Scriptures. Apparently the inspired or non-inspired character of the sacred books is independent of their amount of share in the organic unity of the Bible; how then can this organic unity itself be the basis of an argument *for* or *against* their inspiration? Even granting that all the sacred books admitted by Protestants were rightly inserted into the Canon, and can, on that score, form a sound basis for an argument drawn from the organic unity of the Bible, a further difficulty remains. This argument cannot be shown to be absolutely conclusive, as long as one can conceive that many Biblical writings may have been the mere natural outcome or development, under peculiar circumstances, of conceptions already found in pre-existing Jewish literature, and may have been gathered and united to the books already collected, precisely because they were their natural sequel or complement.

**3. Protestant Appeals to Authority to Prove Biblical Inspiration.** The more one realizes the inadequacy of the *critical* arguments put forward by Protestants in favor of Biblical Inspiration—the principal of which have just been stated and examined—the better able he is to understand how many of them [1] feel compelled to fall back upon what may be called the Catholic ground of *authority*. Like the Catholic scholars and theologians they appeal to the authority of Christ and the Apostles, and some of them even to the authority of the early Church. But unfortunately, unlike the Catholic apologists, they overestimate the value of those arguments when they present them as absolute proofs of Biblical Inspiration, irrespective of the divine authority of the living Church. It is clear, for instance, that every one who recognizes the divine character of Christ must regard as inspired all the books of the Old Testament, because He either quoted them explicitly as the Word of God,[2] or referred to them in general terms, such as "the Scripture," "the Holy Scripture," etc.,[3] the obvious meaning of which at the time was that they had been written under a special divine influence. But it is no less plain that Our Lord's testimony cannot be made to apply to the New Testament writings, none of which was written before His Ascension. There is no doubt, likewise, that the authority of the Apostles can justly be appealed to in reference to all the books of the Old Testament, since they spoke of those sacred writings in exactly the same terms as their divine Master, and shared fully the belief of their Jewish contemporaries in the inspiration of all their contents. Nay, more: one readily sees how, in regard to the books of the New Testament which were written by the Apostles, an argument may be drawn in favor

[1] For quotations from their writings, see unabridged "General Introduction," p. 531 sqq.

[2] Cfr. Matt. xxii, 31, 43, etc.

[3] Cfr. Matt. xiv, 49; Luke xxiv, 44 sq.; etc.

of their inspiration from the promise of special divine help made to them for their *oral* preaching.[1] This special divine guidance would appear more needed for their *written* preaching than for their preaching by word of mouth, because destined to shape the faith of the Church in all future ages. And further, the manner in which St. Peter speaks of the Epistles of St. Paul generally, placing them on the same level as the other divine Scriptures,[2] seems to prove that writings known to have been composed by the Apostles were at once held as inspired. But plainly, even this manner of reasoning would not establish the inspiration of the Acts, of our second and third Gospels, which were not composed by Apostles; while it would leave in doubt that of the Epistle to the Hebrews,—not to speak of other writings of the New Testament,—since its apostolic authorship has ever been a matter of serious discussion.

In view of the foregoing remarks, it is easy to understand how some Protestant writers fall back on the authority of the early Church to confirm and complete the preceding argument.

This appeal of Protestants to the authority of the early Church adds undoubtedly to the value of an argument drawn from the authority of Christ and the Apostles, but this additional value is derived from a non-Biblical source, and indeed from one essentially opposed to the leading principle of Protestantism, to wit, the rejection of all ecclesiastical tradition. Nor is this all. In denying the inspired character of the deutero-canonical books, all such Protestants as claim to admit the authority of the primitive Church go right against its verdict, for impartial history bears witness to the fact that "the Christian theologians of this period (that is, of the first three centuries) knew the Old Testament only in its

[1] Cfr. Matt. x, 19, 20; John xiv, 26; etc.

[2] II Petr. iii, 15, 16.

Greek form (the Septuagint), and consequently made no distinction between what we call Canonical Books (Hebrew) and Apocryphal Books (Greek). They quote both with the same confidence, with the same formulas of honor, and atttribute to them an equal authority based on an equal inspiration."[1] So that, in denying the inspiration of the deuterocanonical books, these same Protestant scholars reject as unsound the verdict of the Church herself, and treat her authority as an insufficient proof of Biblical Inspiration.

### § 2. *Proofs set forth by Catholics.*

**1. Grounds Common to them and to Protestants.** Several of the arguments advanced by Protestants in favor of the divine character of the Bible have been used with great effect by Catholic apologists in the nineteenth century. The elevating character of the Sacred Scriptures, their superhuman contents, and their organic unity are grounds common to all believers in Holy Writ, and when set forth in a striking manner are very helpful to souls struggling against infidelity. Catholic theologians, however, while mentioning these as a confirmation of the Christian belief in inspiration, prefer to appeal to *authority* as a proof in favor of this doctrine.

Here again they meet with those Protestants who, as stated above, have felt the need to fall back upon the testimony of Christ and the Apostles, and even upon that of the early Church, to obtain solid proofs for the inspired character of Holy Writ. The first ground, then, which is common to Catholic and to Protestant scholars is the authority of Christ and His Apostles. As it has been set forth above with sufficient clearness and detail, it will not be given again here.

The second ground common to Catholic and to a certain number of Protestant scholars is the testimony of the early

[1] Reuss, History of the Canon, p. 93 (Engl. Transl.).

Church. Apart from the infallible character of her teaching, the early Church bears witness to the fact that when the sacred writers had not yet all left this world, or had but recently disappeared, her great teachers, such as St. Clement, St. Polycarp, St. Justin, St. Irenæus, etc., had learned to regard as *divine*, and to quote as the *words of the Holy Ghost*, the writings of the Old and New Testaments. It is indeed true that in the present day we are not able to describe the exact manner in which these great lights of the Church were led to put certain books (particularly those of our New Testament which are not referable to the Apostles and which do not seem to have received their distinct approval) on a level with those which Jesus and His Apostles had expressly treated as divine. But no one can reasonably doubt that they must have had satisfactory reasons for doing so—reasons which justify the same claims to inspiration accorded to the other sacred writings. Thus, then, the human testimony of the early Church may be appealed to by Catholics and Protestants in order to complete whatever might be missing in the preceding argument to prove that *all* the books of the Bible should be regarded as inspired.

It should, however, be borne in mind, as already pointed out, that once this testimony of the early Church is regarded as valid, the inspiration of the deutero- as well as of the proto-canonical books of the Old Testament should be admitted, since it is a historical fact that the early Church held these two classes of books as equally sacred and inspired.

**2. Ground Special to Catholics in Favor of Inspiration.** Over and above the grounds which are common to Protestants and Catholics, there is the distinctly Catholic argument which rests the belief in the inspiration of the Bible directly on the divine authority of a living Church.[1] It is plain that whatever

[1] "The Church of God is the pillar and ground of the truth" (I Tim. iii, 15); the living "body of Christ" (Ephes. i, 23; etc.); "led by the Holy Spirit into all

difficulties may be raised against the doctrine of Biblical Inspiration, in the name of History, of Higher Criticism, of Geology, etc., Catholics will ever find a solid ground for their faith on this point, in the simple consideration that the inspired character of the Bible is certain beyond all doubt, since the Church, speaking with divine, and consequently infallible, authority, teaches it as a truth revealed by God. This is the ground which Catholic theologians and ecclesiastical writers naturally appeal to after they have established the right of a living Church to teach Revelation with divine authority; and it is the proof upon which St. Augustine—and no doubt countless minds after him—felt necessary to fall back upon, when he said: "I would not believe the Gospel, unless the authority of the Church moved me thereto." [1] Finally, according to many polemical writers among Catholics, it is the only adequate proof that can be given of the inspiration of Sacred Scripture, because, viewing it as a divine operation, not necessarily known even to the mind that is acted upon, they hold that the testimony of God Himself is required to make men perfectly sure of it, and that this divine testimony comes to our knowledge only by the voice of the Church which He has commanded us to hear.[2]

the truth" (John xvi, 13; Acts xv, 28); having the positive mission "to teach all nations even to the consummation of the world" (Matt. xxviii, 19, 20); and to do so with the same authority as Christ Himself (cfr. John xx, 21; Luke x, 16).

[1] Contr. Epistolam Fundamenti, chap. v (MIGNE, P. L., vol. 48, col. 176).

[2] Cfr. WISEMAN, Principal Doctrines and Practices of the Catholic Church Lect. ii; Bishop WEATHERS, in the Clerical Symposium on Inspiration, p. 193 sq.

## SYNOPSIS OF CHAPTER XVII.

### Nature and Extent of Biblical Inspiration.

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**I. Nature of Inspiration**

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   - What is Affirmed:
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2. Questions freely debated:
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**II. Extent of Inspiration.**

1. The two tendencies regarding it defined.
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     - Exclusion of every positive and formal error.
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## CHAPTER XVII.

### THE NATURE AND EXTENT OF BIBLICAL INSPIRATION.

#### § 1. *Nature of Biblical Inspiration.*

**1. The Common Teaching of the Church.** As Catholics abide by the traditional teaching of the Church, they naturally agree in admitting certain positions and in rejecting others, accordingly as they are implied in or, on the contrary, excluded by the teaching of the Church regarding Biblical Inspiration. This agreement does not indeed prove that all such positions must be either held or rejected with the very same degree of certainty, for they are not equally either bound up or inconsistent with the definitions of the Church as to this point of Christian belief. But it sets forth, both in a positive and in a negative manner, the common teaching of the Church regarding the true nature of Scriptural Inspiration; and because of this the positions either affirmed or denied by all Catholic scholars deserve a very special notice.

Starting from the definitions of Trent and of the Vatican quoted in a preceding chapter, Catholic theologians regard as most intimately bound up with the notion of inspiration therein declared that of the divine authorship of all the books of the Bible. They likewise maintain that because of such divine authorship the inspired writings have God for their *principal* author, and consequently do not simply *contain* the Word of God, but *are* in a true sense the Word of God; for the one truly said to be the author of a book is obviously its principal

cause, and on that account the words of the book are regarded and cited as his words. By a further but no less necessary deduction from the same definitions they admit that the human writers of the sacred books by means of whom they have been composed are at best, yet truly, *coagents* with the Holy Ghost in their composition; and this, in fact, is the plain meaning of these words of the Vatican Council: "Spiritu Sancto inspirati *conscripti* (sunt libri)." [1]

Having thus recognized God as the principal author of the Canonical Books, and the inspired writers as the secondary or instrumental causes of the same sacred writings, Catholic theologians proceed to describe the manner in which the influence of God, on the one hand, and the action of the human agents, on the other, combined to produce the Holy Scriptures. As regards God's share in this production, they tell us that "Inspiration, in the special and technical sense, includes the three following operations of the Holy Ghost upon the sacred writers: (1) the impulse to put in writing the matter which God wills they should record; (2) the suggestion of the matter to be written, whether by revelation of truths not previously known, or only by the prompting of those things which were within the writers' knowledge; (3) the assistance which excludes liability to error in writing all things, whatever may be suggested to them by the Spirit of God, to be written." [2] This description of the manner in which God acts upon the mind and will and attention of the sacred writers has a twofold advantage: it fully embodies the tradition of Christian ages concerning this divine action, and it clearly states in what way God's design to express in writing certain truths by means of human instruments was safely carried out. It is not, therefore, surprising to find that it has recently received the solemn approval of the Holy See in the following words of the Ency-

[1] Constit. de Fide Catholica (sess. iii), cap. ii, de Revelatione.

[2] Card. MANNING, The Temporal Mission of the Holy Ghost, p. 161 (3d edit.), cfr. also FRANZELIN, PESCH, TANQUEREY, etc., etc.

clical *Providentissimus Deus:* "Nam supernaturali ipse (Deus) virtute ita eos ad scribendum excitavit et movit, ita scribentibus astitit, ut ea omnia eaque sola quæ ipse juberet, et recte mente conciperent, et fideliter conscribere vellent, et apte infallibili veritate exprimerent: secus, non ipse esset auctor sacræ Scripturæ universæ."

As regards man's share in the production of the sacred writings, Catholic scholars bid us to remember that, though acting as coagents under God's special influence, the inspired writers are no mere passive instruments, but bear themselves under the divine action as truly intelligent, active, and free agents. This they infer particularly from the words by which the author of the Second Book of the Machabees confesses that "in undertaking his work of abridging (the five books of Jason of Cyrene) he has taken in hand no easy task, yea, rather a business full of watching and sweat, . . . and has, according to the plan proposed, studied to be brief";[1] and also from the statement of St. Luke in his prologue, where he says that he has investigated with great care all the matters he is about to write down.[2] From these same passages and numberless others in Holy Writ Catholic theologians conclude likewise that the sacred writers may have been unconscious of the fact of their inspiration, and that, as they may have committed to writing things which they already knew, so they may have also embodied in their books pre-existing documents.[3]

Side by side with these positions which all Catholic scholars maintain as embodying the positive and correct notion of inspiration, there are a few opinions which they expressly reject as insufficient, and which have been, or are still, held by either Catholic or Protestant scholars. Among these

[1] II Machab. ii, 27; cfr. also verse 24.

[2] St. Luke i, 3.

[3] Cfr. NEWMAN, On the Inspiration of Scripture, in The Nineteenth Century, February, 1894, p. 195; VIGOUROUX, Manuel Biblique, vol. i, n. 253.

we may mention, first, the view of those who affirm that the *divine assistance*, which would simply exclude liability to error, is sufficient to constitute the notion of inspiration. Clearly this opinion is opposed to the scriptural expressions θεόπνευστος;[1] ὑπὸ τοῦ Πνεύματος ἁγίου φερομενοι,[2] the first of which conveys the idea of positive previous impulse on the part of God upon the writers; and the second describes the same sacred writers as actual instruments carried along by the Holy Spirit. Further, this notion likens the sacred writings to the infallible utterances of Popes and Councils, which all grant are not, strictly speaking, *inspired;* and it is difficult to see how a mere surveillance or watching over a writer can truly make God the *author* of the book of that human writer.

A second theory likewise rejected, because inadequate, is that of theologians, who, with Lessius, have thought that for inspiration it was enough that a book written with ordinary care and diligence, but without supernatural divine aid should be declared free from error by subsequent direct approbation from *God*. On the one hand, such subsequent divine approbation cannot be considered as equivalent to a divine action which would enable us to speak of God as the true author of a work thus exclusively written by man; and, on the other hand, this notion of inspiration is directly opposed to the doctrine of Pope Leo XIII. in his Encyclical quoted above, and to that of the Council of the Vatican speaking of the sacred books as written jointly by the action of the Holy Ghost and by that of the human writer: "Spiritu Sancto inspirante, *conscripti.*"

Still more inadmissible is the view according to which the subsequent approbation of *the Church* would suffice to make of an ordinary book an inspired writing. The Church has

[1] II Tim. iii, 16.
[2] II Pet. i, 21; cfr. also verse 20.

indeed the mission to declare with infallible authority whether a book has been written under the divine influence which is called inspiration; but this does not impart to her the power of supplying whatever amount of divine influence might have been missing in the book at the time of its composition. Besides, the Church herself assembled in the Vatican has openly disclaimed this power, when she said that "she holds the books of both Testaments as sacred and canonical, not because, having been composed by mere human industry, they were afterwards approved by her authority, . . . but because, having been written under the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, they have God for their author." [1]

**2. Questions Freely Debated.** Besides the positions which all Catholic scholars agree in admitting or in rejecting, there are theories regarding the nature of inspiration which, though correct from the standpoint of Catholic orthodoxy, have not won universal acceptance. In their several degrees of probability they have been or are still freely debated in the Church, and, as such, claim a passing notice.

The first, which, as we have seen,[2] has been admitted by many Fathers and ecclesiastical writers, looks upon the sacred writers as mere amanuenses of the Holy Spirit. In thus conceiving of inspiration as a divine *dictation*, which the human authors of the various books simply set down in writing, one may feel perfectly sure that his notion of inspiration includes all the elements required by the Church in order that God may be truly said to be "the author" of the sacred writings. He may well doubt, however, if his theory of *verbal* inspiration, as it is called, does not detract too much from the share of the human agents in the composition of

[1] Vatic. Concil., Constit. Dogmatica, Dei Filius, cap. ii, de Revelatione.

[2] Cfr. Chap. xv, On the History of the Doctrine of Inspiration.

the inspired books, by reducing it to the mere mechanical act of writing. On the one hand, most Fathers and ecclesiastical writers have ascribed a greater share than here admitted to the human writers of the books of Holy Writ; and, on the other, the individual peculiarities of style, diction, thought, manner of treatment, and more particularly the discrepancies as regards the details recorded, tend to prove that the so-called human element of the Sacred Scriptures is much greater than this "mechanical theory" of inspiration would have us believe.

The second orthodox theory—also called a *verbal* inspiration theory—maintains that, though an active and free agent in the composition of an inspired book, the sacred writer was under the special divine influence which is called inspiration, at the very time when he either wrote or dictated to an amanuensis the words which go to make up his inspired work. According to this theory, the human author of a book of Holy Writ selects indeed freely and according to his literary ability, information, etc., the words which he puts down, but his selection and use of them are not withdrawn from the influence of the Holy Spirit. This second opinion, which makes due allowance for the peculiarities as regards the matter and form of the various books, has the further advantage to harmonize well (1) with the description of Scriptural Inspiration quoted above from the Pope's Encyclical, in which Leo XIII. implies that the divine assistance guided the sacred writers from the beginning to the end of their work; (2) with these expressions of the Council of the Vatican: "Spiritu sancto inspirante *conscripti* (sunt libri)," which naturally suggest that the selection and use of the primitive words of the inspired records were not made independently of, but rather conjointly with, the divine action. It is not, therefore, surprising to find that it has been steadily gaining ground, and that it counts among its advocates such

Catholic writers as De Schaezler, Fernandez, Le Hir, Tanquerey, Loisy, Lagrange, Lévesque, Chauvin, etc.

The last opinion to be mentioned ascribes still more scope to the individual action of the sacred writers in the composition of the Holy Scriptures. It maintains that God may truly be called "the author" of an inspired book, even though His action, as regards those things which were already within the writer's knowledge, should be limited to an impulse to write on a given topic, and to a general indication of the things already known which He wishes should enter into the composition of the book. It is thus, we are told, that several Papal documents have been framed, the authorship of which everybody ascribes to the Sovereign Pontiff who promulgated them.[1] In the abstract, this view, which may be called a *Limited Illumination* theory, seems sufficient to meet the requirements of the definitions of the Church concerning inspiration, inasmuch as a book thus composed may strictly be called "the Word of God." It can hardly be denied, however, that, when considered in the concrete, a work thus written would hardly have been composed under the divine influence as it is described by Catholic theologians at large, and by Leo XIII. in the passage of the Encyclical *Providentissimus Deus*, quoted above.

### § 2. *Extent of Biblical Inspiration.*

**1. The Two Tendencies Regarding it Defined.** It is beyond doubt that all Catholic writers look upon the traditional teaching of the Church regarding the *nature* of inspiration as a valid means to determine its *extent*, and it is no less certain that were they simply to draw therefrom strictly logical consequences, they would naturally be led to the conclusion that in their primitive form the sacred books

[1] Cfr. CORLUY, S.J., in JAUGEY, Dictionnaire Apologétique de la Foi Catholique, col. 935.

were perfect in every respect. They would naturally maintain that since "God is their author" in such a manner that they must be regarded as truly "His Word," everything in them—the words no less than the thoughts, the apparently unimportant statements no less than the sentences directly connected with faith and morals, etc., etc.—must bear the manifest impress of their divine origin. In reality there is none among them who, after the example of the Fathers and other ancient writers of the Church, does not feel the necessity of modifying such *a priori* views so as to bring them into harmony with the actual features of the inspired writings. All grant, for instance, that the grammatical inaccuracies or other defects of style and composition noticeable in the sacred books should not be reckoned among the objects to which divine inspiration is directly extended. So that, according to all Catholic scholars, the traditional teaching of the Church, or, more precisely, deductions from this teaching, and the features exhibited by the inspired writings as determined by a scientific investigation of the sacred text, should be both combined in an attempt to determine the exact extent of the divine influence under which the Canonical Books were composed. Now it is precisely in regard to the manner in which these two elements should be combined that two general tendencies may be discovered among Catholic writers. While most of them seem chiefly inclined, not indeed to deny, but to interpret, well-ascertained facts so as to bring them into harmony with the deductions which they regard as validly drawn from unquestionable principles, many, on the contrary, think that, in connection with some particular facts, it would be better to allow greater weight to them, and to modify the theoretical deductions on their account.

**2. The Two Tendencies Regarding the Extent of Inspiration Compared.** The divergent tendencies just

exposed account for the fact that, though agreeing upon the main points connected with the *extent* of Biblical Inspiration, Catholic writers are still divided concerning some points of great importance. We now proceed briefly to set forth, first, the positions upon which they all agree; and, next, those respecting which they remain at variance.

The first, and perhaps best-grounded, position common to all Catholic scholars is the natural sequel of the traditional views regarding the nature of inspiration, which have already been exposed. It is to the effect that *divine inspiration must extend to matters other than faith and morals*, because this is an obvious inference from the dogmatic formula: "The sacred books of both Testaments have God for their author." This view has the further support of the testimony of Our Lord and the New Testament writers, who regard indiscriminately as God's Word passages which have a bearing on faith and morals and those that have not. Again, it is the only position in harmony with the well-nigh universal and constant consent of the Fathers and ecclesiastical writers; and the opposite view has lately been disapproved and rejected by the Holy See, in the following terms: "The system of those who, in order to rid themselves of these difficulties, do not hesitate to concede that divine inspiration regards the things of faith and morals, and nothing beyond, . . . this system cannot be tolerated."

As regards those matters not appertaining to faith and morals which should be considered as inspired, Catholic theologians admit generally that they include "omnes omnino res et sententias, quæ ab auctore scriptæ sunt." [1] The grounds set forth for this view are practically those that have just been exposed; and to them may be added the fact that whatever things or statements may be proved to have been added to the

[1] C. Pesch, S.J., Institutiones Propædeuticæ ad Sacram Theol., prop. lx. Cfr. Tanquerey, De Locis Theologicis, n. 55; Chauvin, L'Inspiration des Divines Ecritures, chap. vi; etc.

primitive text by any one besides an inspired writer are at once considered as merely man's word; while, on the contrary, whatever may be proved to have belonged primitively to the text is treated at once, wherever found, as the Word of God.

The second leading position admitted by all Catholic scholars is that *divine inspiration so extends to all the contents of Holy Writ as to exclude from it every positive and formal error.* The chief ground for this position is the tradition of the Church, which, as well remarked by Loisy, "never looked upon the Bible as a mosaic made up of erroneous human statements set side by side with statements true and divine. Whoever starts from the data supplied by tradition must admit that there is no room for error in Holy Writ." [1] And this is precisely the ground taken by Leo XIII. in his memorable Encyclical *Providentissimus Deus*, where, after having stated that "so far is it from being possible that any error can coexist with inspiration, that inspiration not only is essentially incompatible with error, but excludes and rejects it as absolutely and necessarily as it is impossible that God Himself, the Supreme Truth, be the author of any error whatever," the Sovereign Pontiff adds: "This is the ancient and unchanging faith of the Church," quotes as a proof the words of the Council of the Vatican, and concludes: "Hence, because the Holy Ghost employed men as His instruments, we cannot, therefore, say that it was these inspired instruments who, perchance, have fallen into error, and not the primary author."

But while thus excluding every positive and formal error from the genuine passages of the sacred writings, Catholic scholars *do not intend to affirm that divine inspiration makes them all to be true in exactly the same manner:* "Vi inspirationis non omnia eodem modo vera sunt." [2] Most statements

[1] Loisy, La Question Biblique et l'Inspiration des Ecritures, p. 4.

[2] Pesch, loc. cit., prop. lx; and also n. 629.

of Holy Writ must, of course, be taken as expressing a plain objective fact, and consequently as containing an absolute truth. This is clearly the case with such statements as: God created heaven and earth; Jesus suffered and died for our sins; etc. But there are other statements in the Bible, such, for instance, as refer to purely scientific matters (that the earth is immovable; that the sun rises and sets; that the moon is larger in size than the stars; etc.), which, on the one hand, cannot be regarded in exactly the same light as those referred to above, since they do not contain the expression of something absolutely true, and which, on the other hand, should not be set down simply as erroneous because they are part and parcel of inspired writings, that is, of books from which every positive and formal error must be excluded. Whence the third position common to all Catholic writers, that in certain Biblical statements not absolute but simply relative truth may be admitted. That this third position is not an evasion invented to escape the difficulties recently raised in the name of science against the truth of the Biblical records is plain from the fact that such an ancient theologian as St. Thomas († 1274) practically held it when he wrote: "Moyses rudi populo loquebatur, quorum imbecillitati condescendens, illa solum eis proposuit quæ manifeste sensui apparent." [1] In fact, as early as the time of St. Augustine († 430) it was clearly seen that statements referring to purely scientific matters should not be taken as expressing absolute truth, because, as this holy Doctor says, "the Holy Ghost who spoke by them (by the inspired writers) did not intend to teach men these things which were in no way profitable to salvation." [2] It is not, therefore, surprising to find that in his Encyclical on "The Study of Holy Scripture," which embodies so well the tradition of Catholic ages,

[1] Summa Theologica, pars i, quæst. lxx, art. i, ad 3um.

[2] De Genesi ad Litteram, Book II, chap. ix, n. 20.

Pope Leo XIII. draws the following conclusion: "Hence they (the inspired writers) did not seek to penetrate the secrets of nature, but rather described and dealt with things in more or less figurative language, or in terms which were commonly used at the time, and which, in many instances, are in daily use at this day even by the most eminent men of science. Ordinary speech primarily and properly describes what comes under the senses; and somewhat in the same way the sacred writers—as the Angelic Doctor also reminds us—'went by what sensibly appeared,' or put down what God, speaking to men, signified, in the way men could understand and were accustomed to." [1]

Thus, then, according to this position of Catholic scholars, an erroneous impression might indeed be gathered from certain statements of the sacred writers, as, for instance, from their unscientific descriptions of natural phenomena. But the erroneous impression may and should be set aside by treating the popular language under their pens as we treat similar language on the lips of even the best-informed men of science. It describes external phenomena without reference to their true nature, and describes them accurately as they appear. In a word, it contains not absolute but only relative truth.

It is precisely in connection with the manner and extent in which relatively true statements should be admitted in Holy Writ that differences of views arise among Catholic writers. While many would restrict such relativeness of truth to a comparatively few Biblical passages which refer to purely scientific matters, others think it should be extended to all scientific matters, and to many historical statements besides.

The main argument set forth by the latter class of scholars for extending the relativeness of truth to historical statements is drawn from the many discrepancies which they meet with

[1] Encyclical *Providentissimus Deus*, p. 36 sq.

in the historical books, the numerous inaccuracies as regards chronology, geography, etc., which they think are found therein. To save the truthful character of the inspired narratives, without going against what appears to them the plain meaning of the text, they affirm that here, as in connection with purely scientific statements, appeal should be made to an accommodation by the sacred writers to the manner in which historical matters were dealt with in their time. The compiling of traditions or documents, for instance, was in vogue in their day without reference to the objective truth of these sources of information; and in consequence we find such traditions or documents with their variations simply embodied in the sacred records. Again, as Schanz puts it: "When the sacred writers do not claim to write history, or to write it as demanded by modern criticism, they cannot be accused of error if the representation does not completely correspond to the standard of severely historical science." [1]

As a confirmation of their position in regard to purely historical matters, the same Catholic scholars remind us that no less illustrious a writer than St. Jerome seems to have affirmed it when he wrote: "Quasi non multa in Scripturis sanctis dicantur juxta opinionem temporis quo gesta referuntur, et non juxta quod rei veritas continebat.' [2] Finally, they tell us that, far from having been rejected by the Holy See, the view that purely historical statements found in Holy Writ may be treated in about the same manner as some of its scientific statements has been practically endorsed by Leo XIII. in his Encyclical "On the Study of Holy Scripture." For, having adopted and approved the view that the language

[1] In the Theol. Quart.-Schrift for 1895, p. 188. Cfr. also p. 191, where the same writer says: "In Chronicles many differences of dates and facts could be adduced which are explicable in part from the aim of the book, in great part only from the use of different sources."

[2] In Jeremiam, cap. xxviii, verses 10, 11.

of the sacred writers may be taken as not conveying the strict scientific truth, the Sovereign Pontiff says a little later: "The principles here laid down will apply to cognate sciences, and especially to history." [1]

The second main difference between the advocates of the two tendencies described above bears precisely on this: that while many Catholic scholars admit the existence of *relatively* true scientific statements only, when the sacred writers do not make such statements their own, many others, on the contrary, affirm their existence even in cases where these purely scientific views are countenanced by the inspired writers. Here again the latter scholars appeal to the manner in which the Bible speaks of such matters, as a ground for their position. They tell us that the sacred writers, as granted on all hands, were not favored with a special revelation concerning the true nature of purely scientific facts; that in their language they so clearly share the opinions of their time that, did we not know that such opinions are not absolutely correspondent with the reality of things, we should never suspect that they were not fully endorsed by them; that, far from even giving us a single hint showing that they hold different positions from those which they state, they assume the current notions of their time as a basis for their arguments; that, in a word, everything in the manner of the inspired writers is so calculated to produce the impression that they themselves countenance the scientific views which they express, that every attempt at showing the reverse must clearly appear to lack a basis of fact. Hence they conclude that as far as the plain meaning of the Biblical statements is concerned, it bears out their own position.

At the same time, these Catholic writers distinctly maintain that such endorsements of views not absolutely true are not

[1] Encyclical, p. 38 (Official Engl. Transl.).

positive and formal errors on the part of the sacred writers. "We have not the remotest intention of saying," writes Schanz,[1] "that the sacred writers have erred, or were liable to err, in things even unimportant and accidental, but only that in such matters as profane science and profane history they leave the responsibility of borrowed statements to the source whence they drew them, or that they followed a common and well-recognized way of thinking and speaking. If any one should here think it is his duty to protest against the supposition that God could have been the occasion of an erroneous chronology, his contention would only show a mistaken notion of inspiration." Willingly, too, these same authors admit with St. Augustine that "the sacred writers, or, to speak more accurately, the Holy Ghost who spoke by them, did not intend to teach men these things (that is to say, the essential nature of the things of the visible universe), things in no way profitable unto salvation." [2]

In bringing to a close this brief exposition of the leading conclusions of contemporary Catholic scholars regarding the *extent* of Biblical Inspiration, we subjoin the three following remarks: (1) the points of agreement among Catholic writers are both more numerous and more important than the points of disagreement; (2) as long as the advocates of either of the two tendencies which have been exposed maintain the exclusion of every positive and formal error from genuine Biblical statements, they seem to remain within the lines of Catholic orthodoxy; (3) the extending of relativeness of truth to all scientific statements and to historical statements not having a direct bearing on points of faith and morals

[1] A Christian Apology, vol. ii, p. 434 (Engl. Transl.).

[2] Words of St. Augustine as quoted by Leo XIII. in the Encyclical *Providentissimus Deus*. In reference to the exact bearing of the same Encyclical, see the valuable article entitled "A Negative View of the Encyclical *Providentissimus Deus*," by Rev. A. J. Maas, S.J., in The Catholic Quarterly Review for 1895, pp. 162–175.

is not perhaps necessary either for exegetical scholars to determine accurately the sense of the sacred records, or for apologetical writers to vindicate that exclusion of positive and formal error which Catholic tradition has ever maintained regarding all the statements of the Holy Scriptures.

# PLATES.


I. Table showing the Derivation of the Hebrew Characters from the Egyptian.

II. Moabite Stone—*circa* B.C. 890.

III. Origen's Hexapla.

IV. Samaritan Pentateuch Roll (Naplous).

V. Hebrew MS.—9th cent. (?)

VI. Codex Vaticanus—4th cent.

VII. Codex Sinaiticus—4th cent.

VIII. Codex Alexandrinus—5th cent.

IX. Codex Ephræmi—5th cent.

X. Codex Bezæ—6th cent.

XI. Cursive Greek MS.—A.D. 1022.

XII. Curetonian Syriac MS.—5th cent.

XIII. Peshitto Syriac MS.—A.D. 464.

XIV. Sahidic MS.—5th cent. (?)

XV. Codex Vercellensis (Old Latin)—4th cent.

XVI. Codex Amiatinus (Vulgate)—*circa* A.D. 715.

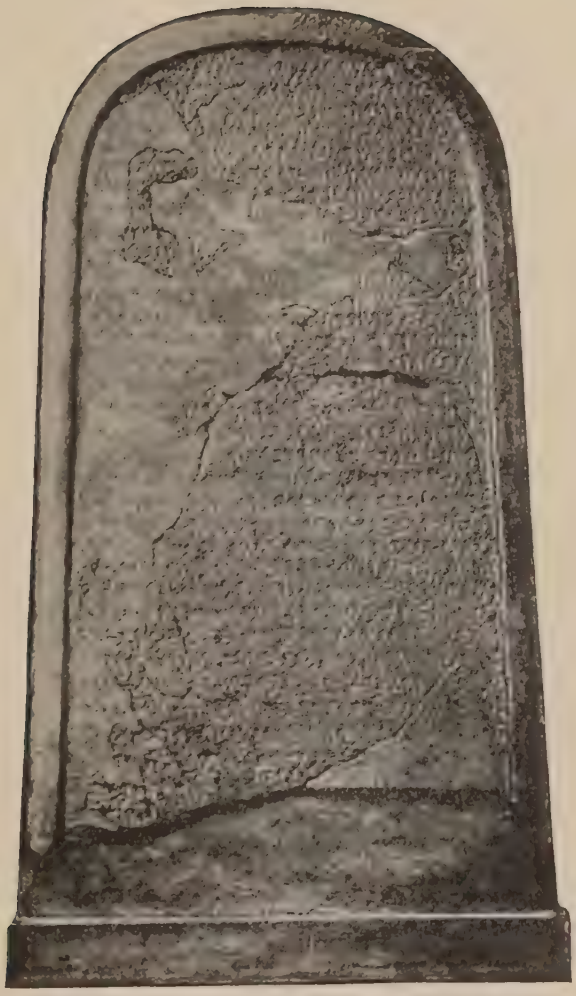
XVII. Wycliffe's Bible—A.D. 1382.

XVIII. Tyndale's New Testament—A.D. 1525.

XIX. Specimens of the English Translations of the Bible.

| | | HIERO-GLYPHIC | HIERATIC 12 & 18 DYNASTY | MESA 9TH CENT. B.C. | PHŒNICIAN (SILOAM INSCRIPTION) | SIDONIAN ESHMUN, IV. SEC. | HEBREW (SQUARE CHARACTER) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | ɔ | | | | | | א |
| 2 | b | | | | | | ב |
| 3 | c | | | | | | ג |
| 4 | d | | | | | | ד |
| 5 | h | | | | | | ה |
| 6 | F(v) | | | | | | ו |
| 7 | t'(z) | | | | | | ז |
| 8 | x(ch) | | | | | | ח |
| 9 | ṭ |  |  | | |  | ט |
| 10 | i(j) |  |  |  |  |  | י |
| 11 | k |  |  above No 3 |  |  |  | כ |
| 12 | l |  |  |  |  |  | ל |
| 13 | m |  |  |  |  |  | מ |
| 14 | n |  |  |  |  |  | נ |
| 15 | s |  |  |  | |  | ס |
| 16 | ɛ |  |  |  |  |  | ע |
| 17 | p |  |  |  |  |  | פ |
| 18 | ṣ(ss) |  | (see above No 7) |  |  |  | צ |
| 19 | q | ◁ (▷) |  |  |  |  | ק |
| 20 | r |  |  |  |  |  | ר |
| 21 | s(sh) |  |  |  |  |  | ש |
| 22 | t(th) |  |  |  |  |  | ת |

TABLE SHOWING THE DERIVATION OF THE HEBREW CHARACTERS FROM THE EGYPTIAN.



MOABITE STONE—CIRCA B.C. 880.

## OCTAPLA (Ps. 2, 6).

| ΤΟ ΕΒΡΑΙΚ. | ΤΟ ΕΒΡ. ΕΛΛ. ΓΡΑΜΜΑΣΙΝ. | ΑΚΥΛΑΣ. | ΣΥΜΜΑΧΟΣ. | Οἱ Ὁ. | ΘΕΟΔΟΤΙΩΝ. | Ε'. | ς'. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| ואני נסכתי מלכי | ουανι νασαχθι μαλχι. | κἀγὼ διεσωσάμην βασιλέα μου. | κἀγὼ ἔχρισα τὸν βασιλέα μου. | ἐγὼ δὲ κατεστάθην βασιλεὺς ὑπ' αὐτοῦ. | ἐγὼ δὲ κατεστάθην βασιλεὺς ὑπ' αὐτοῦ. | κἀγὼ διεσωσάμην βασιλέα μου. | κἀγὼ ἔσωσα τὸν βασιλέα μου. |

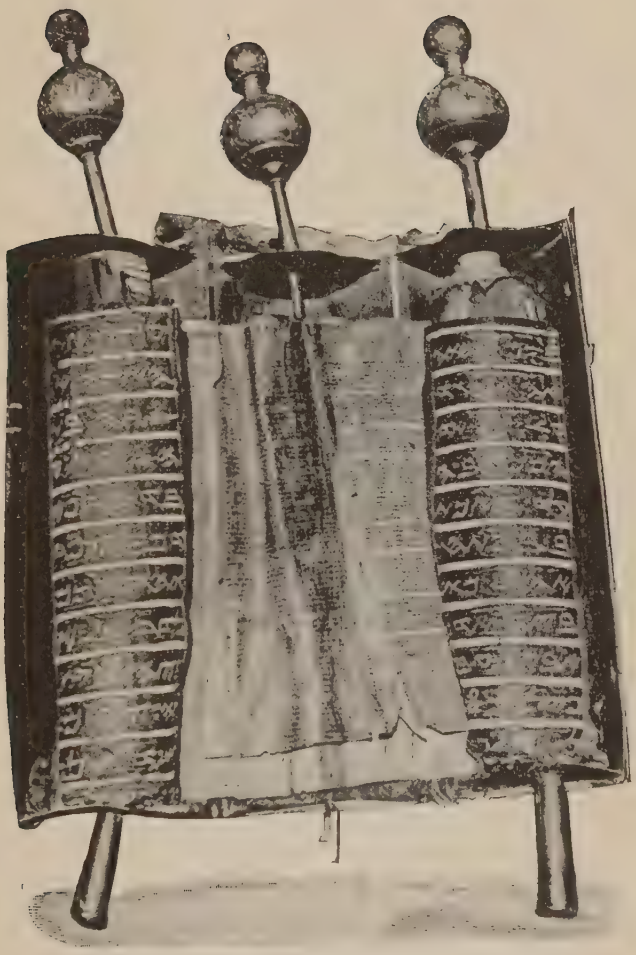
## HEXAPLA (Os. 11, 1).

| ΤΟ ΕΒΡΑΙΚΟΝ. | ΤΟ ΕΒΡ. ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚ. ΓΡΑΜΜΑΣΙΝ. | ΑΚΥΛΑΣ. | ΣΥΜΜΑΧΟΣ. | Οἱ Ὁ. | ΘΕΟΔΟΤΙΩΝ. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| כי נער ישראל ואהבהו וממצרים קראתי לבני | χι νερ Ισραηλ ουεαθηου ουμεμμεσραιμ καραθι λεβανι. | ὅτι παῖς Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ἠγάπησα αὐτὸν καὶ ἀπὸ Αἰγύπτου ἐκάλεσα τὸν υἱόν μου. | ὅτι παῖς Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ἠγαπημένος, ἐξ Αἰγύπτου κέκληται υἱός μου. | ὅτι νήπιος Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ἐγὼ ἠγάπησα αὐτὸν καὶ ἐξ Αἰγύπτου κέκληται υἱός μου. | ὅτι νήπιος Ἰσραὴλ καὶ ἠγάπησα αὐτὸν καὶ ἐκάλεσα υἱόν μου ἐξ Αἰγύπτου. |

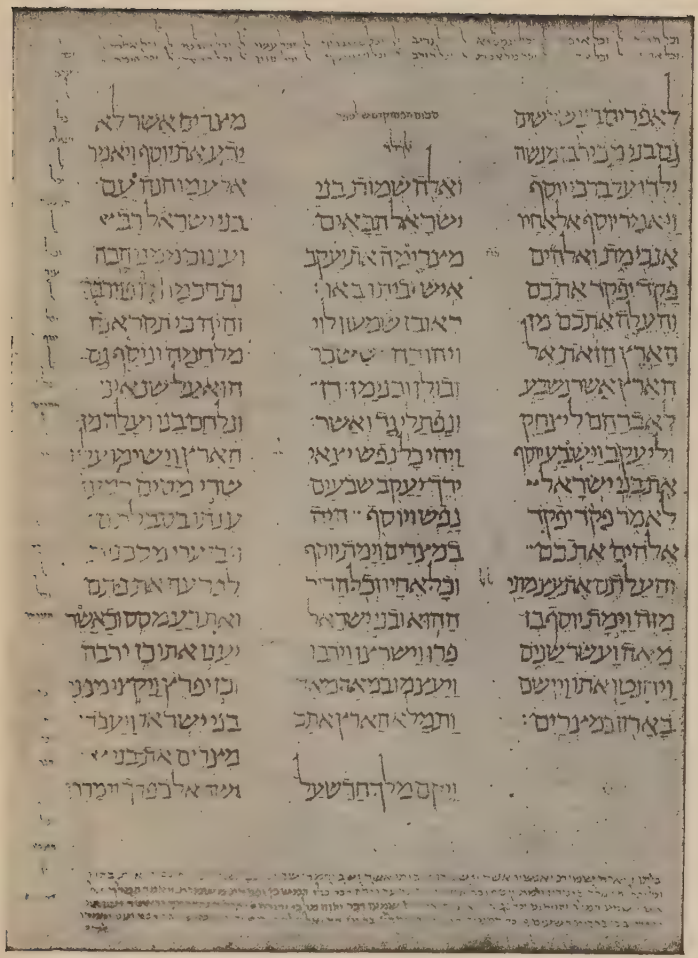
## TETRAPLA (Gen. 1, 1).

| ΑΚΥΛΑΣ. | ΣΥΜΜΑΧΟΣ. | Οἱ Ὁ | ΘΕΟΔΟΤΙΩΝ. |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ἐν κεφαλαίῳ ἔκτισεν ὁ θεὸς σὺν τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ σὺν τὴν γῆν. | Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἔκτισεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν. | Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἐποίησεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν οὐρανὸν καὶ τὴν γῆν. | Ἐν ἀρχῇ ἔκτισεν ὁ θεὸς τὸν οὐρανόν καὶ τὴν γῆν. |

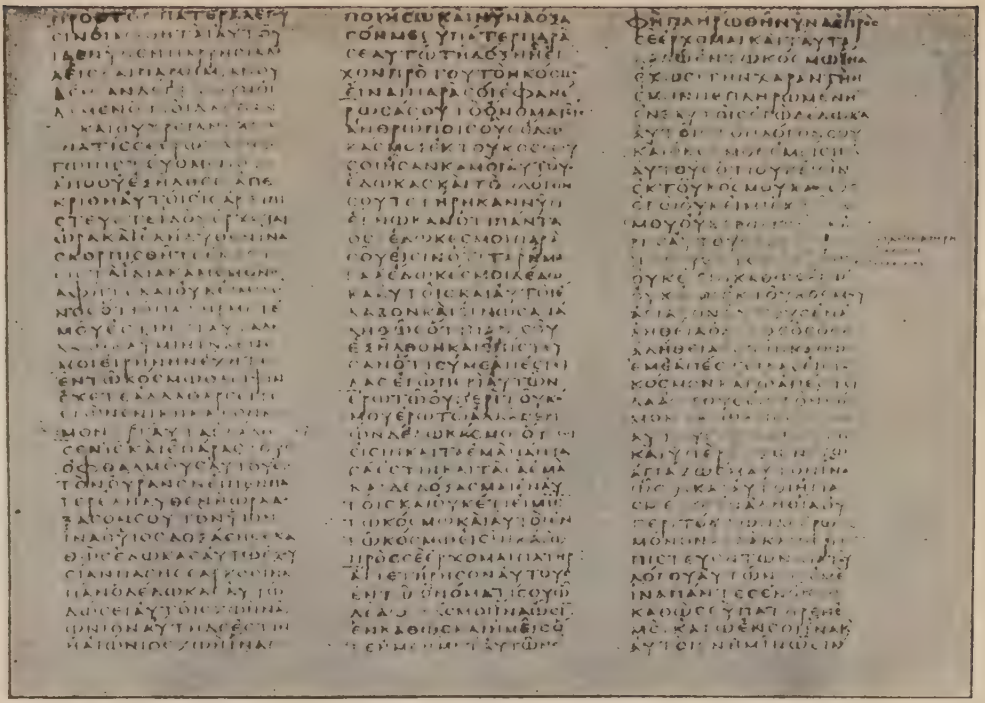
ORIGEN'S HEXAPLA.



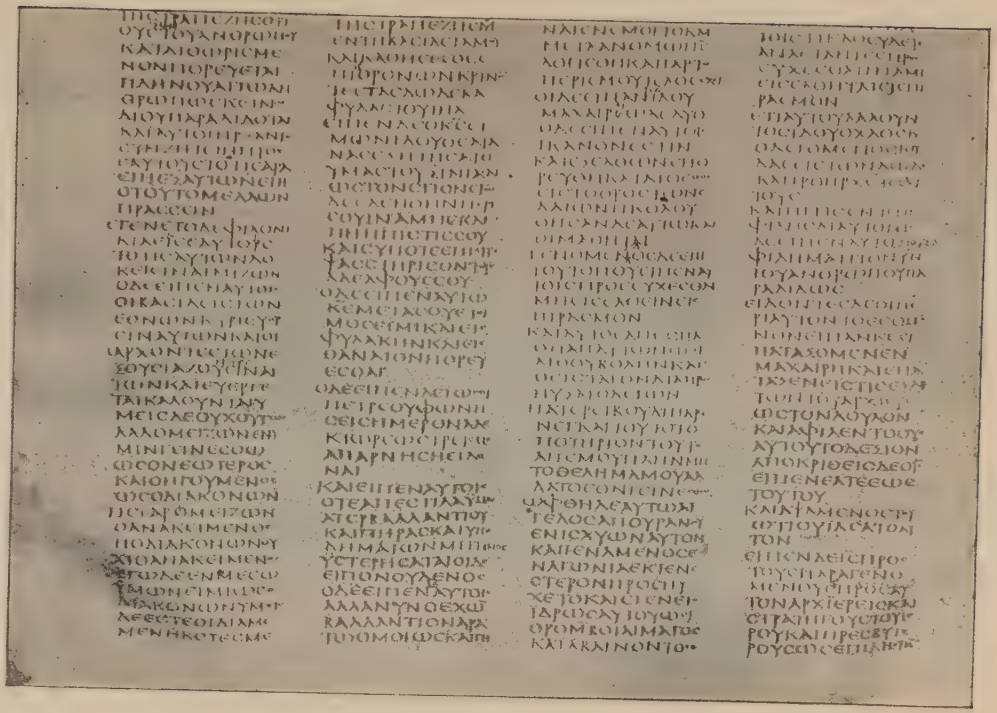
Samaritan Pentateuch Roll (Naplous).



HEBREW MS.—9TH CENT.(?)

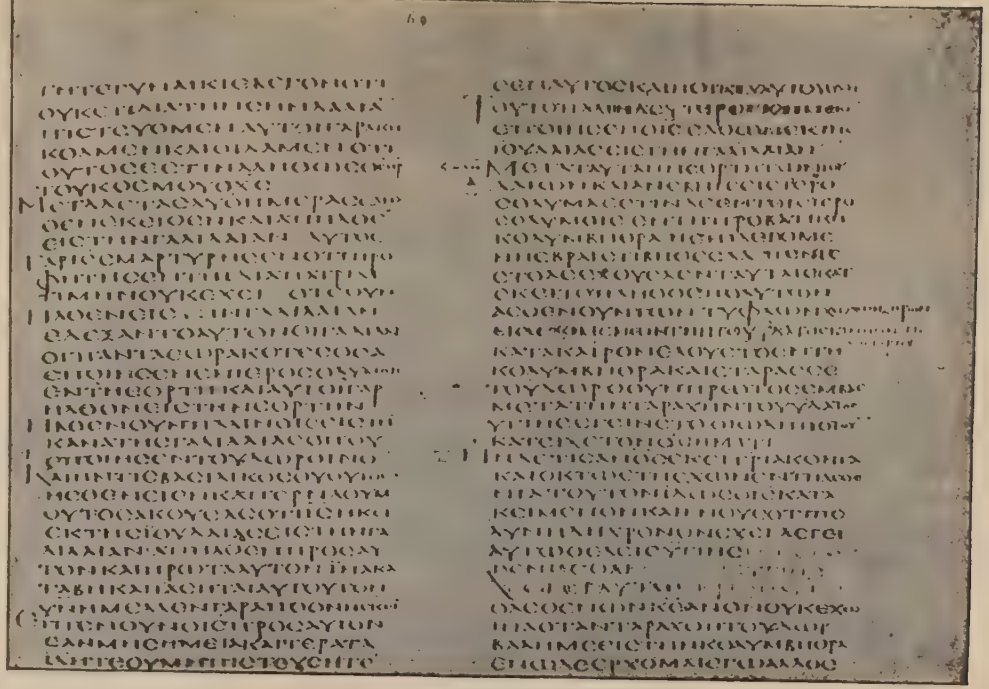


Codex Vaticanus—4th Cent.



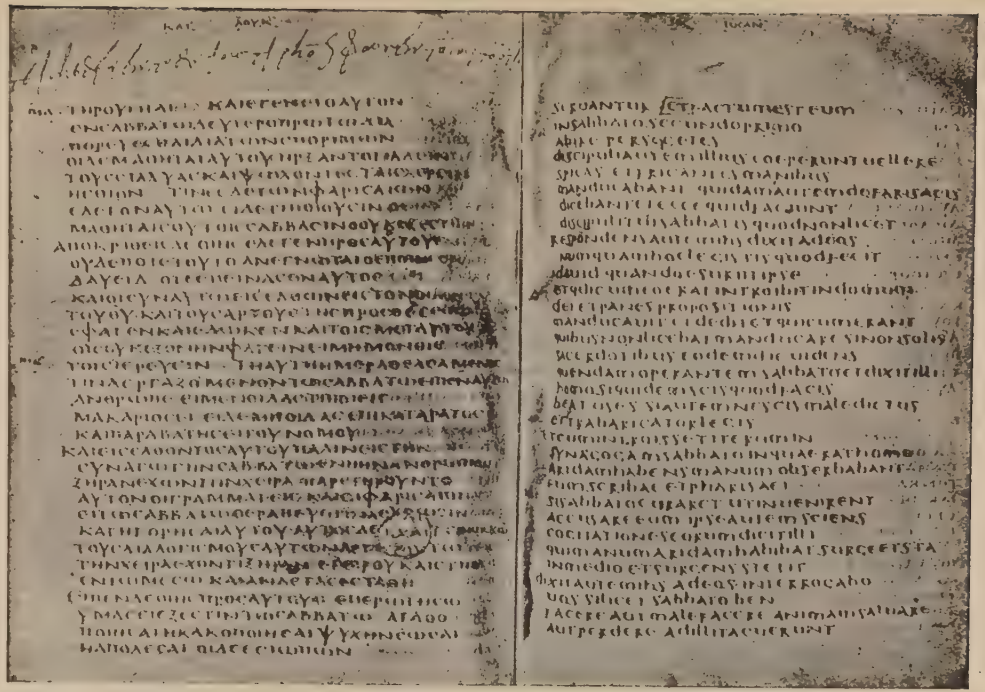
Codex Sinaiticus—4th Cent.

Codex Ephræmi—5th Cent.



Codex Alexandrinus—5th Cent.

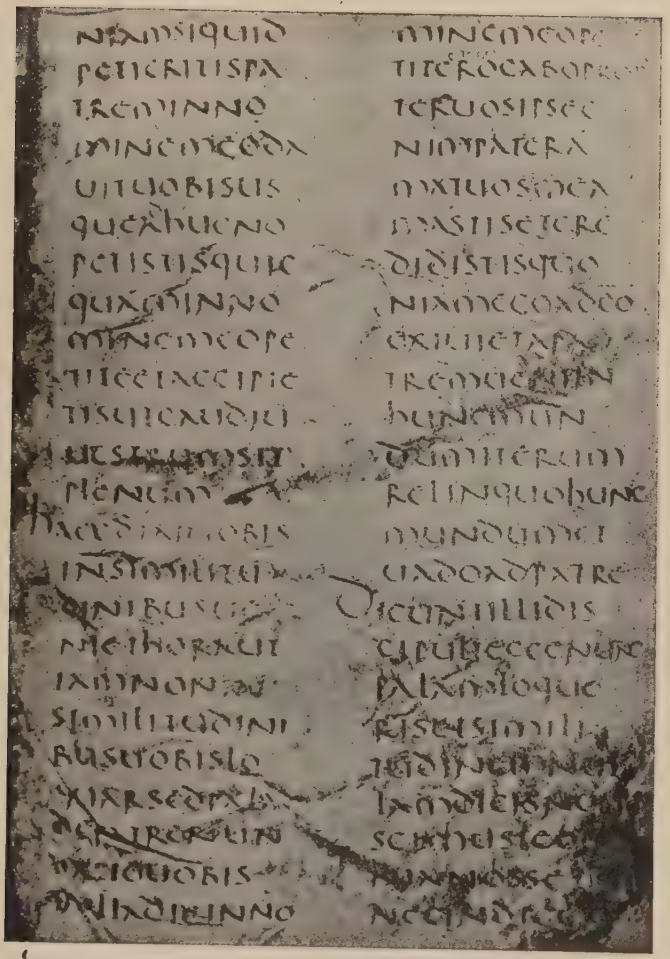
Cursive Greek MS.—A.D. 1922.



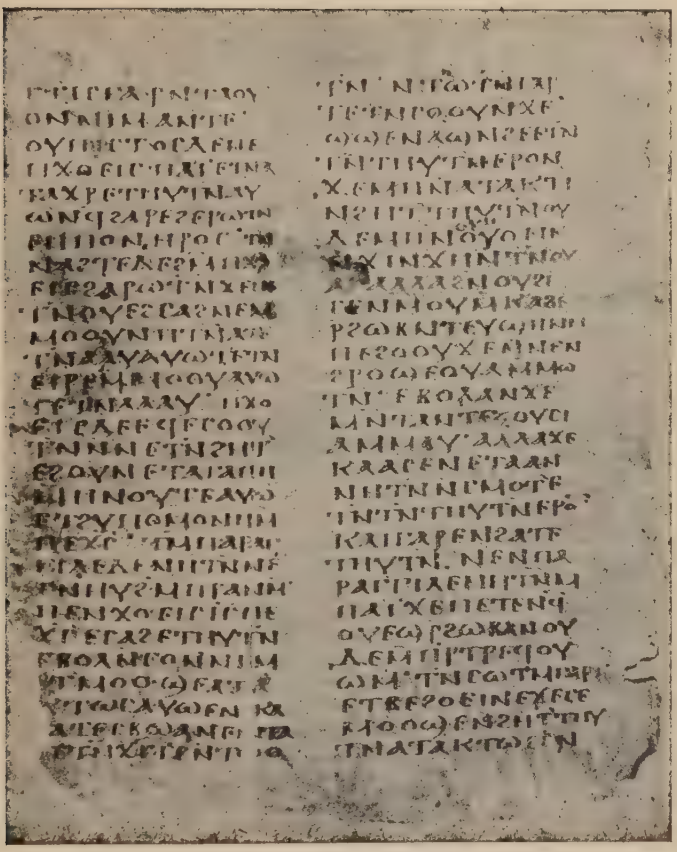
Codex Bezæ—6th Cent.

Peshitto Syriac MS.—A.D. 464.

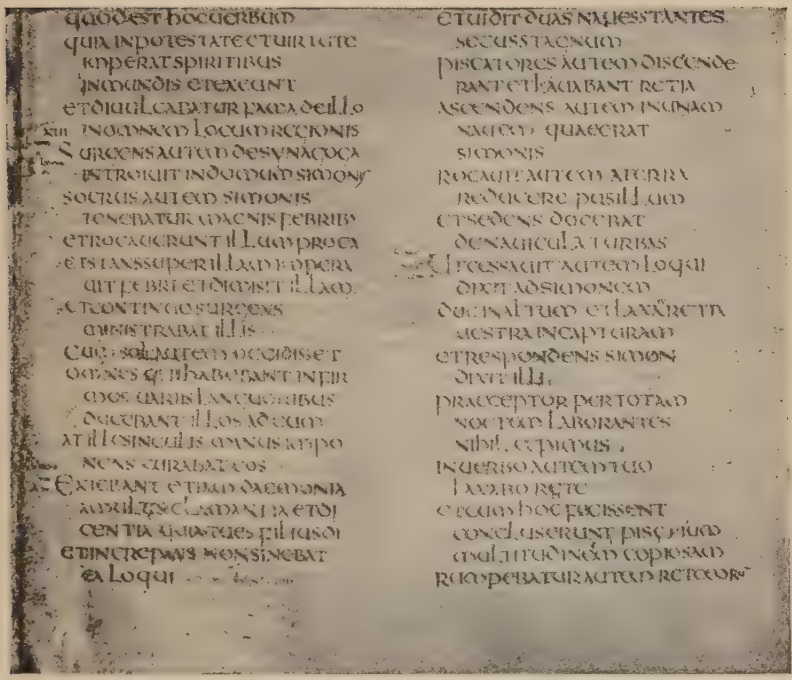
Curetonian Syriac MS.—5th Cent.



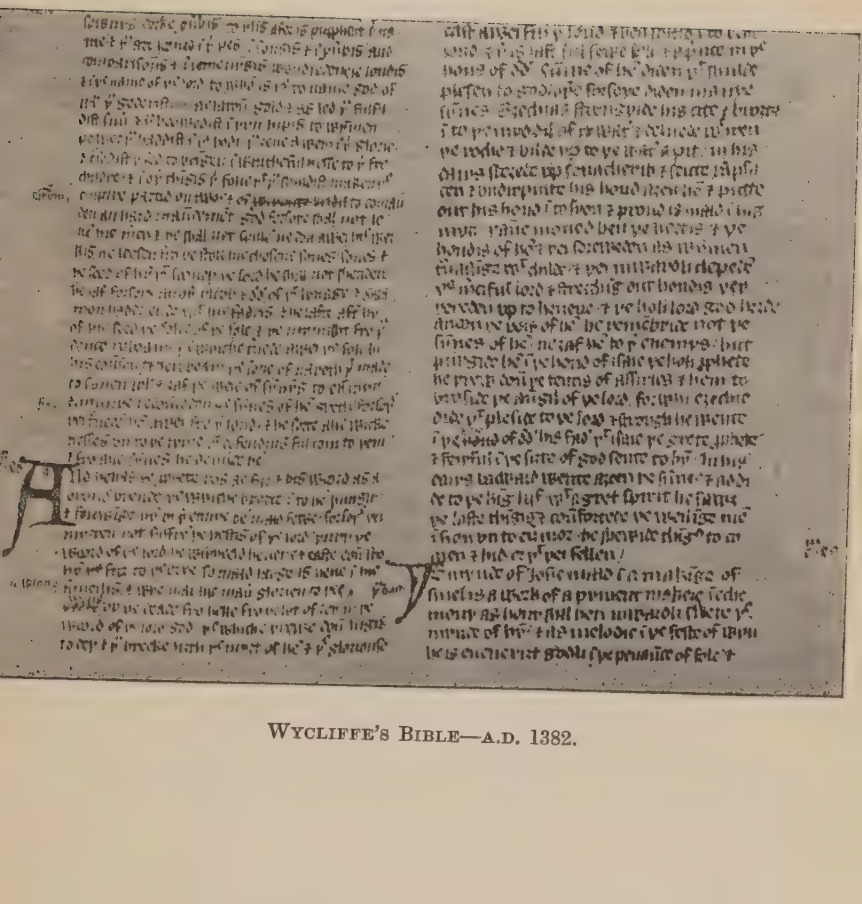
Codex Vercellensis (Old Latin)—4th Cent.



Sahidic MS.—5th Cent.(?)



Codex Amiatinus (Vulgate)—circ. a.d. 715.



WYCLIFFE'S BIBLE—A.D. 1382.

# The fyfth Chapter.

1. vi. WHen he sawe the people/ he went vp into a mountaine/and wen he was sett/ hys disciples cam vnto him / and he opened his mouth/and taught them sayinge: Blessed are the povre in sprete: for thers is the kyngdom of heven. Blessed are they that mourne: for they shalbe comforted. Blessed are the meke: for they shall inheret * the erthe. Blessed are they which hũger and thurst for righteweſnes: for they shalbe fylled. Blessed are the mercyfull: for they shall obteyne mercy. Blessed are the pure in hert: for they shall se god. Blessed are the maynteyners of peace: for they shalbe called the chyldren of god. Blessed are they which suffre persecucion for righteweſnes sake: for thers is the kyngdom of heven. Blessed are ye whẽ men shall revyle you/and persecute you/ and shal falsly saye all manner of evle sayings agaynst you for my sake. Reioyce ãd be gladde/for greate is youre rewarde in heven. For so persecuted they the prophetys which were before youre dayes.

All these dedes here rehearsed as to norishe peace/ to shewe mercy/ to suffre ꝑsecuciõ/ and so forth/make not a man happye and blessed/ nether deserve the rewarde of heven: but declare and testifie that we are happy and blessede and that we shall have greate ꝓmociõ i heven. and certyfyeth vs i oure hertes that we are goddes sonnes/ & that the holy goost is in vs. for all good thynges are geven to vs frely of god for christes blouddes sake ãd his merittes

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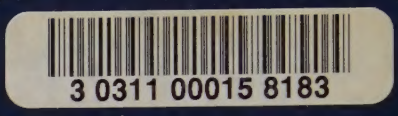
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